DECEMBER, 1921 VOLUME LIV, NO. 4

THE BOOKMAN

THE HUNDREDTH AMENDMENT

A Chapter from The Outline of Posterity

By Oliver Herford

AFTER the passage of the Ninety-eighth Amendment making it a misdemeanor to *"manufacture, sell, own, possess, purchase, nurse, dandle or otherwise caress or display that effigy of the infant form commonly known as a Doll"*...the abolition of that feathered symbol of vicarious maternity, the Stork, followed as a matter of course.

The passage of the Anti-Stork Bill or, to be more accurate, the Ninety-ninth Amendment, thanks to the tenacity and tact of President John Quincy Epstein, was the most expeditious piece of legislation put through by the hundred and fifth Congress.

It must not be forgotten, however, that the introduction of lectures on obstetrics into the curriculum of the kindergartens had done much to educate the child vote and that at the time the fate of the Stork was hanging in the balance, that once esteemed Bird of Prurient Evasion was already becoming unpopular and well on its way to join the Dodo.

And now the department of government devoted to the cause of Infant Uplift, having abolished the Mock-Offspring and settled the fate of the Bird of Nativity, cast about for some new Field of Endeavor.

And what more fitting than that they should light upon that hoary old impostor masquerading under the several aliases Santa Claus, Saint Nicholas, Kris Kringle, and Father Christmas?

At once the Propaganda was started.

Press agents were engaged, lecture tours arranged, magazines subsidized.

No matter what it might cost, this "Vulture gnawing at the Palladium of Infant Emancipation" must be destroyed!!

Santa Claus, once, in the memory of living men and women, adored by children and winked at by their parents, was now branded as an impostor, a mountebank, a public nuisance, and a perverter of infant intelligence.

Santa Claus was an outlaw from the Commonwealth of Reason.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was "thumbs down" for Santa!

It may be well to explain right here (since none of the events chronicled in this History has yet happened) that the movement for the Emancipation and Self-Determination of Infants, which has now taken such great strides, had its initiation in the presidential term of Miles Standish Sovietski when Congress extended the franchise to every child over five years of age who had made any serious contribution to literature or higher mathematics.

It was in the same year that President Sovietski signed the Sixty-fourth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, prohibiting the publication of fairy tales, and Congress suspended the Limitation-of-Search Act in order that private libraries and nurseries might be raided without warning and all copies of the forbidden works summarily seized and destroyed.

Simultaneously with the federal enactment, the states of Washington, Illinois, Nevada, and Oregon, ever in the advance of any great intellectual movement, passed laws prohibiting *"the personification or representation, public or private, in theatre, music hall, club house, lodge, church fair, schoolhouse, or private residence, of any supernatural, fairy, or otherwise mythical person or persons or fraction thereof"*.

The passing of a Constitutional Amendment was now an almost everyday occurrence. Indeed, since the ratification of the Forty-fourth Amendment prohibiting the use of sarsaparilla as a beverage (coffee and tea had been legislated out of existence five years earlier) the enactment of a new Amendment excited little or no comment. Even the Seventy-ninth Amendment forbidding *"the use of caviar, club sandwiches, and buttonhole bouquets, except for medicinal purposes"*, received only casual notice in the Metropolitan Dailies.

The twentieth century was rapidly nearing its close and the political apathy that for fifty years had been gradually benumbing the Public morale now threatened to paralyze completely what little still remained of courage and initiative.

Even the latest work of Bernard Shaw, "A Bird's-Eye View of the Infinite", published (with a five volume preface) on Mr. Shaw's hundred and fortieth birthday, aroused so little resentment that his projected visit to the United States had to be abandoned, in spite of the fact that "Bean and Soup o'Bean", written only a week earlier, was acknowledged to have contributed largely to the triumph of the Seventy-ninth Amendment, making Vegetarianism compulsory in the United States.

The Hundredth Amendment passed quickly through the earlier stages of routine and perfunctory debate without any appreciable sign of anything approaching popular protest.

Here and there a guarded expression such as "Poor old Santa! I'm sorry he's got to go!" was voiced, in the privacy of a club, by some elderly gentleman. Nothing more.

Somewhere, behind Somebody, was a Power that directed and guided,—perhaps threatened. Nobody knew who or what or where it was or in what manner it worked, but work it did and to such purpose that, after a scant week of cut and dried speechmaking that deceived no one, the Amendment was submitted unanimously by both houses of Congress and the foregone conclusion of ratification was all that remained to make the abolition of Santa Claus an accomplished fact.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Then, inevitably as fish follows soup, followed the ratification.

The Hundredth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting Santa Claus, slipped through the ratification process like an oil prospectus in a mail chute. There was only one hitch, Rhode Island, but since Rhode Island had refused to ratify a single one of the last Seventy-nine Amendments, her action was accepted as part of the program and a proof of unanimity.

So Santa Claus was abolished?

Not so fast please!—Who's writing this History anyway?

* * * * * * * *

'Twas the night before Christmas
And in the White House
Not a creature was stirring
Not even a * * * * *

For the benefit of the clever reader who may have guessed the word left out in the last line of the above quatrain, I will explain that the asterisks are used in obedience to a clause of the Ninety-first Amendment prohibiting, both in speech and print, the use of the word * * * * * which, as the political emblem of the Free People's Party (now happily defunct), came into such contempt that it was made a misdemeanor *"to print, publish, own, sell, purchase, or consult any book, pamphlet, catalogue, circular, or dictionary containing the word* * * * * *". It has been estimated that over eighty million dollars' worth of Century and Standard dictionaries were destroyed in the first year of this Amendment's operation. The loss in Nursery Rhymes, children's books, and Natural Histories is beyond computation.

But to return to the White House.

President John Quincy Epstein had retired to his study on the second floor shortly before midnight, taking with him the engrossed copy of the Hundredth Amendment which now only required his Spencerian signature to expunge the name of Santa Claus forever from the American speech and language as utterly and irrevocably as the forbidden word * * * * *.

The hours passed in a perfectly orderly manner, like school children at a fire drill—*one, two, three, four*—without pushing or jostling—*five, six, seven, eight*—(don't you think history is much more interesting in the form of a simple "Outline" like this than spun out in the common manner?)—*nine, ten—!* At eleven o'clock the door of the President's study was burst open by the order of the Vice President, Rebecca Crabtree, now, by a sudden and mysterious stroke of Fate, herself become the President of the United States.

For John Quincy Epstein was dead.

How or just when he died will never be known. Always a cold, forbidding (not to say prohibiting) man, his body when found was still cold—if anything colder; his watch which should have marked the exact moment of his demise, was ticking merrily, so the exact moment will forever remain unrecorded.

But Santa Claus still lives and will live forever!

On the massive gold-inlaid-with-ivory desk (a Christmas gift from the United Department Stores of America), lay a paper, inscribed, and signed in the President's handwriting, and sealed with his official seal.

It was the presidential veto of the Hundredth Amendment; and by virtue of a clause in Amendment Thirty-three *"no Constitutional Amendment vetoed by the President shall ever be resubmitted to the country nor any fraction thereof—"*

Santa Claus will live forever! Hurray for Santa Claus!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW YORK AND THE ENGLISH VISITOR

By Henry B. Curry

With Sketches by Frances Delehanty

IF the report is true that Sir James Barrie, most popular of living writers these days in the English-speaking world, will soon reinforce the procession of oversea authors who have been visiting "the States", he cannot expect to duplicate the bizarre and memorable welcome enjoyed by Charles Dickens four score years ago.

European statesmen have been hinting that America is still too isolated, not to say colonial, in its foreign policy. With far more vigor and far less courtesy certain of our own literary folk, led by Sinclair Lewis, Floyd Dell, and Zona Gale, have emphasized this diplomatic criticism with a sudden domestic rebellion against the micropolitanism of our social life. But the vastly widened vision of American culture within the memory of men still living gains a curious testimonial through the difference between our national appraisement of the literary lion in 1842 and in 1921. Never again will the Yankee world be stricken with a "Dickens epidemic"; never again will a New York editor trumpet the arrival of an author with the big-type exclamation, "God grant we may not all go crazy with joy!"

Ibáñez, Maeterlinck, Chesterton, Squire, Wells—none of these writing tourists can, of course, compare in popularity, either abroad or at home, with the Boz who was related to the people through all of Mr. Lincoln's prepositions. Yet there was a spontaneous, pastoral, and strident simplicity in this country's reception of Dickens that still appears, when one revives the record, much more remote than its actual date. Tom Moore, at an earlier period, had won a hospital-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity infinitely less strenuous. Even the revered Lafayette, a co-savior of the nation with immortal George, acquired fewer tributes, it is said, of American popularity than did the merry spinner of the Pickwick tales.

Despite his alien medium, his exotic field, Maurice Maeterlinck, among the recent pilgrims, has come closest to the trail of hysteric hospitality trodden, with some reluctance, by the English novelist. Barrie, no doubt, would come closer. But the approach of either successor to the Dickens progress would still be estimated in terms of Einstein relativity.

The New York tributes to Maeterlinck might even have been modeled upon those devised to gratify Boz. Each of the two writers, furthermore, began his visit by apparently seeking seclusion. Upon arriving at the Carlton House on the afternoon of Saturday, February 12, 1842, Dickens made known that, until after "the grand ball" of which he was to be the central figure at the Park Theatre two days later, he would deny himself to callers. Maeterlinck essayed a similar sequestration upon his recent arrival at the apartments of his host, A. A. Anderson, in the Bryant Park Building. The novelist was socially introduced, the day after his arrival, through a dinner at a private house, being entertained by Cadwallader Colden. Promptly, too, the poet became the guest of Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, Jr., at her home in Fifty-fifth Street. The day succeeding each dinner came the special pageant to delight the visitor —Dickens going to "the great Boz ball" and Maeterlinck to "the Blue Bird ball". At each affair amateurs socially prominent gave tableaux from the author's works. For the "world's première" of the "Oiseau Bleu" no corresponding exemplar could have been conceived by way of compliment to a writer of prose fiction: the English-speaking stage then lacked both Hopper and "Mr. Pickwick". But a virtual equivalent in point of honor was the exceptional dinner for Boz at the City Hotel—a feast presided over by Washington Irving. At this dinner, moreover, the Englishman addressed the public in a long and graceful speech; which might be thought to have its place upon the visitor's program akin to M. Maeterlinck's address at Carnegie Hall; for Dickens had not come to lecture.

Those numerous differences, however, that marked the visit of Dickens have more interest for present-day observers than the various similarities. In journalism, for example, two famous Gotham editors—Horace Greeley of the "Tribune" and James Gordon Bennett, Sr., of the "Herald"—disclose their personal rivalry, their contrasting policies, and their virtual agreement, nevertheless, to combat the adulation with which American read-

ers and certain American papers were surfeiting "the country's guest".

There had been some crude suggestions of publicity—unintentional, no doubt. The "Tribune" had been running instalments of "Barnaby Rudge". Local publishers had announced "a spirited and faithful portrait of Boz"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as well as new editions of "Rudge" and "Pickwick Papers". "The Boz Waltzes" were brought out soon after the great ball. Vague allusions to the author's visit had been made until, at last, on Monday, January 23, the "Tribune", in the course of a column of foreign news that reached Boston per the steamship "Britannia" the previous Saturday, announces that "Charles Dickens, the distinguished author of 'The Pickwick Papers', 'Master Humphrey's Clock', etc., with his wife, are likewise among the passengers". They had been eighteen days in transit.

Three days later Mr. Greeley observes: "Charles Dickens, our country's well-beloved visitor, will give us a call here in The Commercial Emporium, if he is not beslavered and lionized into loathing us. We hope to get a look at him, but begin to despair of it if he is to be disgusted with such liquorice doses as the following in

Monday's Boston 'Transcript'"; and Horace adds the "Transcript's" paragraph regarding Boz as "one of the most frank, noble-hearted gentlemen we have ever met with—perfectly free from all haughtiness and apparent self-importance....His lady, too, is most beautiful and accomplished and appears worthy to be the partner and companion of her distinguished husband." The "Transcript" some days afterward is quoted to record that when Dickens entered a Boston theatre, "the *whole* audience rose *en masse* and gave him three cheers". Next Greeley reprints the author's speech at a Hub dinner, on which occasion "O. W. Holmes"—doubtless "The Autocrat"—"was one of those that sang a capital song".

Monday, February 14, the "Tribune" makes known that

> Charles Dickens, with his lady, reached our city on Saturday in the steamboat from New Haven, and was allowed, with very little annoyance, to proceed to his room at the Carlton House. A very miscellaneous, but not large, assemblage had collected on the wharf [at the foot of Beekman or Fulton Street] where he landed; but they were content to gratify their curiosity in silence. We believe he was permitted to spend the evening and the Sabbath undisturbed—to go out and in unannoyed by a spy standing ready to note down his words and caricature his actions. If the facts were otherwise, he will at least do our country the justice to satisfy himself that his tormentors were not Americans.

(A slap presumably at Bennett's Scotch origin and his rather sensational methods.)

Quite otherwise had been the "Herald's" outburst of the previous Friday:

> Today the chronicler of the sad and simple "annals of the poor" may, by possibility, reach this Babel of the New World. [Population something more than 300,000.] He certainly will tomorrow, in time to eat his mutton hot at the Carlton—in which case we hope that the fast-anchored isle of Manhattan may not be "frighted from its propriety".
>
> Boz! Boz! Boz! Buzz! Buzz! Buzz! is all that we hear and see in this city at the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

present time. "Where is Boz?" "When will he come?" "When will he go?" "How does his lady look?" "Is she young?" "Is she pretty?" "How does she dress?" "How does she wear her hair?" "Are you going to the great Boz ball?" "Can you, for the love of Heaven and $25 to boot, get me a ticket for that awfully interesting occasion?"

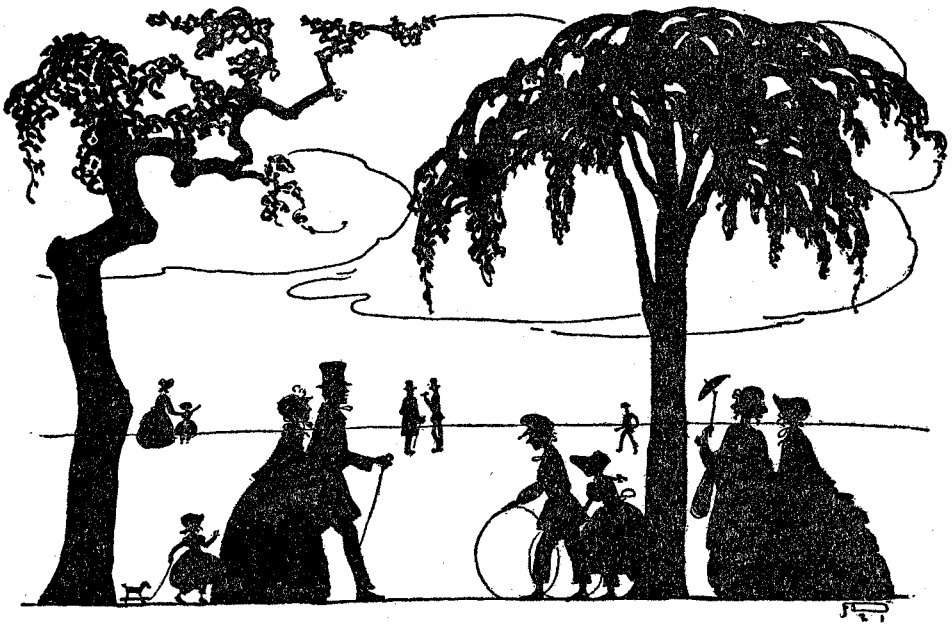
Tickets for the ball are selling at $50 to $100, and at least $2,000 will be spent on the decorations alone. [The regular price of the tickets, just as of those for "the Blue Bird ball", was five dollars each.]

Four columns of fine print in the "Herald" are devoted on Monday, the fourteenth, to details of the wondrous ball to be enjoyed that night. The reader learns, besides, that Boz "and his amiable lady occupied their snug little parlor yesterday up three pairs of stairs at the Carlton till near dark". In taking "apartments" here, Bennett had told, "on the North side of the great Broadway ridge, he has damned forever the Astor, the City and the Waverly hotels. He has had set aside for him and his excellent lady a *parlor, drawing room* and two bed rooms looking on Broadway and Leonard streets"....."He was busily engaged in writing until 3 yesterday, when he and his lady dressed for dinner, ordered a hack, came quietly down stairs about 5 o'clock, and were *drawn* to Cadwallader Colden's, where they dined and spent the evening with a 'werry' recherche party." This David Cadwallader Colden, a descendant of the famous physician, lived at 28 Laight street, between Varick and Hudson streets.

If the "Herald" gossiped frothily half in earnest and half in jest, the "Tribune" showed a self-restraint that no American newspaper would dare indulge today upon a like occasion. Asserting all the privileges of "personal journalism", Mr. Greeley merely stated, when the extraordinary ball had come and gone:

The Boz ball last night was probably the most splendid affair of the kind ever witnessed in this city. We have neither room nor time for any details of the arrangements this morning. It must be sufficient to say generally that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



everything went off in the finest style, and the party had not thought of breaking up when we went to press.

But Mr. Bennett did full justice to his "advance notices"; such as:

The Dickens fever is rising to its culminating point....The Dickens fever is getting to be outrageous. Yesterday every ticket for the ball was sold, and a premium of $15 to $20 was freely offered. All the fashionables are preparing—the Motts, the Hones, the Joneses, the Livingstons, the Cheesmans and 10,000 others. In dress alone the preparations will cost probably $30,000—everything done for cash. The spring trade was never so flourishing in Broadway. Never was there such a time in New York.

The Park Theatre, as mentioned, was the scene of what the New York "Post", then as now conservative, was willing to accept as "the most magnificent fete ever given in this city". Second playhouse on the same site, the Park allured society to 18-20 John Street, near Nassau. The theatre burned in 1849.

A committee of "leading citizens" had decided that "the inside of the theatre should be made to represent a magnificent saloon hung with chandeliers"; that, in addition to the "tableaux vivants" to be placed on a special stage in the back of the auditorium, "the stage part should be highly embellished with designs from the works of Boz"; that "the audience part should be ornamented with festoons of flowers, garlands, draperies, etc."; that, moreover, "the committee should appear in full ball dress and wear distinctive rosettes". But "all fancy dresses" were to be "rigidly excluded". Indeed, so "recherche" was this function that the decorations alone were to cost $2,500.

Evincing no little enterprise, the "Herald" chronicled this thaumaturgic festival in two editions the next day; and with "the special Boz edition" you obtained a supplement, on fine paper, that carried twenty engravings of all the tableaux, of the theatre interior, and of Dickens as he had just appeared in Boston. At Worcester, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presumably at the Hub, he was seen as "a middle-sized person in a brown frock coat, a red figured vest, somewhat of the flash order, and a fancy scarf-cravat that concealed the collar and was fastened to the bosom in rather voluptuous folds by a double pin and chain". But at the New York ball, said the "Post", "he was dressed in a suit of black with a gay vest; and Mrs. Dickens in a white, figured Irish *tabinet* trimmed with mazarine blue flowers; a wreath of the same color around her head, and with pearl necklace and earrings. Her hair was curled in long ringlets." Three thousand guests were present, $6,000 was "taken in", and "the festivities passed off with much good feeling".

A "second edition" of the ball was given two days later. But although it was "attended by 300 highly respectable and well-dressed gentlemen and ladies" it proved disappointing because Boz himself was indisposed and absent.

At the City Hotel, on the west side of Broadway between Thames and Liberty Streets—which had been the most famous hostelry in town before the Astor House was opened in 1836—the "superb dinner" of February 19 assembled, said the "Tribune", "some 700 or 800 of the citizens of New York, embracing much of the Intellect, Social Eminence, Literary Character and Worth of our city....The chair was taken by Washington Irving, assisted by [United States District] Judge [Samuel R.] Betts, Messrs. John Duer, Philip Hone, Gulian C. Verplanck, John A. King, James D. P. Ogden, as vice presidents." Who were the authors present, aside from Irving, one does not learn. In view, however, of the vast material wealth and huge population that confronted M. Maeterlinck, it is suggestive to reflect that this dinner to Dickens might readily have included such sterling writers as Emerson, Poe, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Bryant, Whittier, and Prescott—to give an offhand list. And yet the creator of "The Blue Bird" could have met Amy Lowell and the Broadway dramatists. The menu must have been Gargantuan, for even up at Hartford Mr. Dickens had enjoyed "a truly excellent dinner" of more than four score dishes, including thirty-seven entrées.

Returning to New York in early June, the novelist "and lady" sailed for home in "the fine packet ship George Washington". Because, the "Herald" explained, "Mrs. Dickens, having made her calculation, found this hasty departure necessary, as she is determined there shall be no Yankee born in her family."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WHY OF THE BEST SELLER

By William Lyon Phelps

THERE is no formula to fit the best seller. The Bible and Shakespeare are best sellers, and among authors of our time, such kindred souls as Henry Adams and Harold Bell Wright are emphatically in this class, though Wright somewhat more emphatically than Adams. The novel, "Main Street", which included among its targets people who buy best sellers, is itself a best seller. The inhabitants of Main Street would seem to have a counter-weight in a balancing number of those who laugh at them. Thus, at all events, the country is safe. Complacency finds its complement in ridicule.

I admire both "Main Street" and its author; I rejoice in his success; but the cyclonic popularity of the book—if foreseen—might conceivably have tempered its zeal. To prove that people need it as much as they apparently want it, it should circulate only among the élite and be either vaguely irritating or downright incomprehensible to the general. Instead of being caviar, it is shredded wheat. The other alternative is that there are two million five hundred thousand élite readers in America, allowing conservatively five readers to every copy, and remembering that the sale has considerably increased since I began to write this article. Now to believe that there are millions of the élite in America is to believe that this is indeed God's country; such a belief would put the believer forever on Main Street. The publishers do not regret the popularity of the book; and I hope Mr. Lewis has no qualms. He now has leisure to write even a better one, which he is certainly capable of doing.

Although Emerson's squirrel did not envy the mountain, that was because he was Emerson's squirrel, not a real one. Nearly everything small would like to be big. Many of the German dramatists who scorn Sudermann have unsuccessfully tried to copy his methods—so I read in the work of a German critic. There is no doubt that Henry James would have rejoiced in an enormous public, though in his art he followed the Rehoboam method. The small colleges have their distinct and inimitable merits; of which most of them are quietly and justly proud; but a few of them advertise the benefits of smallness so energetically that if it always paid to advertise, they would lose the quality advertised, as Professor Briggs has said in his own way.

Almost every great poet, dramatist, and novelist has been famous and popular in his own lifetime. Exceptions are only apparent; either the author has died young or his best work has appeared posthumously. Let no sour author trust in posterity. Posterity is far more cruel than the contemporary public; contemporaries abuse, but posterity forgets. When an author is really great, posterity ratifies contemporary opinion. Unfortunately, however, the fact that greatness is popular does not mean that popularity is a true indication of greatness. Where

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a once popular author is gone but not forgotten, I mean, when he is damned by posterity, there were dissenters while he was yet alive. Remember the exalted position of Southey and remember what Byron said of him.

Leaving out the rare appearances of genius, there is always I think a discernible reason why a poem, novel, or play is popular. When somebody frowns and says, "I cannot understand why Harold Bell Wright should sell by the million," he is simply saying that he does not understand human nature. Although many individuals are cruel and selfish, the average person can be easily touched by an imaginary hero or villain—David was instantly stirred by the story of the ewe lamb, yet perhaps at that moment Bathsheba was in the room with her knitting. No critic believes that "Lightnin'" is as good a play as "Riders to the Sea", but "Lightnin'", which I am sorry to say bored me, is exactly the kind of thing that we call sure fire. It hit the centre of the bull's eye, and, as in most plays and stories, the impelling force was a luscious mixture of sweetness and melodrama. It was what people call "wholesome", which depends perhaps somewhat on the stomach. The vogue of "Lightnin'" is more interesting than the play; I mean we can learn more from it.

The two novelists whose books enjoy the biggest sales in America are Gene Stratton-Porter and Harold Bell Wright. In part they owe their circulation to the invincible sentimentality in the human breast. America has no monopoly of this emotion. These two authors are surely not inferior to the beknighted Hall Caine, Marie Corelli, and the late Mrs. Barclay in England, to the late Georges Ohnet in France, to a hundred sloppy novelists in Germany. Every human heart has a percentage of slush. Why should we be surprised at the vogue of Harold Bell Wright when we remember the Dempsey-Carpentier fight? What must Tex Rickard really think of the intelligence of the public? Nothing like this had been seen since the days of Barnum—the expectation of millions whipped to just the right froth, so that whether the fighters were in condition or not, the public was precisely ripe for picking. It was a shame not to take the money. And how fortunate that Dempsey won, as I fervently hoped he would! If he had lost, the world would have wallowed in a trough of sentimentality. In France, the home of art and intelligence, in Paris, the home of intellectual cynicism and mockery, Carpentier would have eclipsed not only Marshal Foch, but all the poets and dramatists. He might have had any decoration. His wife and child would have come to America; it is terrifying to think of the sentimental gush that would have been slobbered on this excellent family. Carpentier is undoubtedly a good fellow and an attractive personality, and I understand that Dempsey is not popular. But for one thing we should all be grateful to Jack Dempsey—he saved us from ourselves.

I am informed on good authority that one of our motion picture actresses—not *the* one—receives weekly five hundred sentimental letters from American men. The private irregularities of a millionaire apparently interest more newspaper readers than disarmament or the League of Nations. Therefore let no one wonder at the vogue of Harold Bell Wright, and let no one waste any ammunition on it. His books are certainly better reading than the sensations just mentioned. Any one of his novels costs

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

less than a ticket to a musical comedy, and gives more in return.

A word of encouragement to public librarians. Along with ministers of the gospel and teachers in the grade schools, public librarians form the finest class of people in America, because they do the most good. Their opportunities for helpfulness come every day, and most of them are eager to take advantage of the chance. Now their bugbear is Harold Bell Wright. Every time a boy or a girl asks for Harold, they vainly try to give him something else. And their souls are filled with distress when the child walks off with Harold under his arm.

I believe it is better that the infant, whether in or out of his teens, should read Harold Bell Wright than not read at all. And surely his elders, who inhale sentimentality in other forms, cannot justly cast a stone. Wright knows how to tell a story adapted to an elementary grade of intelligence; the reader discovers that books are a permanent source of happiness; with them at any moment he may change his environment and his companions, and live in a world of excitement. After a time, he will in many instances proceed to better and more subtle books, and find happiness of a finer kind. He is in the garden of printed pages; let him not forget that the one who led him through the gates was Harold Bell Wright. My pity goes out to the boy or girl who is not brought up with books; who grows up without any insurance against life.

Personally, I have had enough of Harold Bell Wright. I have read every word of two of his books—"When a Man's a Man", and "Helen of the Old House". This "Helen of the Old House"[1] has the ingredients nicely mixed. It is filled with dripping sentiment. There is not a single real character, no one who resembles a complex human being. Each person is put there to support the thesis—which is, that the only way out of labor troubles is for employer and employé to work harmoniously together. An employé who strikes without good reason is every whit as bad as a German imperialist, says Harold Bell Wright; and an employer who is only a profiteer is bad in just the same way. Granted. Let us then organize against both offenders —against the corrupt capitalist and against Bolshevism. Here Harold is undoubtedly Wright.

Whatever may be this book's offenses against literary art—and I saw enough without looking for them—it is really a sermon preached on the labor question. And as his solution is correct, true statements being usually unoriginal, it is possible that many of his readers will profit by his discourse, skilfully adapted as it is to their comprehension. I believe his motive is excellent; he wishes to use his prodigious popularity to help his country and humanity. He knows well enough that the shortest cut to the ordinary intelligence is by the sentimental route, and like a spellbinder, his muzzle velocity is very high. The difficulty is that if the world could be saved by sentimental melodrama, we should have been saved long ago. Nearly all sentimental melodramas are on the side of virtue; as were the novels of Oliver Optic and Horatio Alger, Jr.

I have no particular desire to join the army of those who satirize virtue. As between virtue and vice, even in this ridiculous world, virtue actually seems to me less absurd than vice.

The case of Gene Stratton-Porter is not quite so easy as that of her running mate. The publishers tell us that

[1]Published by D. Appleton and Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nine million copies of her books have been sold. With five readers to each copy, this means a circulation of forty-five million. She is a public institution, like Yellowstone Park, and I should not think she would care any more than a mountain for adverse criticism. She does, though. Wise men know that more than half the things that appear in print are not true, and yet many have such a superstitious reverence for type that an attack or a misrepresentation fills them with real agony. Even those whose position seems immovable—Pope, Tennyson, Henry James—suffered torture when they read an adverse criticism printed in an ephemeral paper, and written by a nobody. One of Yale's greatest presidents, in the eighteenth century, saw an unfavorable criticism of his book in an English journal, and he immediately fainted away.

Gene Stratton-Porter lives in a swamp, arrays herself in man's clothes, and sallies forth in all weathers to study the secrets of nature. I believe she knows every bug, bird, and beast in the woods. I believe she recognizes every sound in a forest, and can tell you what caused it. She is primarily a naturalist, one of the foremost in America, and has published a number of books on flora and fauna, illustrated with photographs of her own taking. These books—which are closest to her heart—have only a moderate sale. Thus she hit upon the plan of writing sentimental novels, in which her observation of nature is brought to the attention of America. I have no doubt that she has led millions of boys and girls into the study of natural objects; that she has accomplished in this way much permanent good.

She is as full of energy as Roosevelt, and as hearty an American. She could have retired on a fortune long ago, but she will never retire until the day of her death, which I hope may be long distant. She is eaten up with ambition, and with the joy of life; few have more fun in their daily existence than she. I have no doubt that if the public could see some of the letters which she receives by the cartload, they would share her belief that she has not lived in vain.

I have read three of her novels—"A Girl of the Limberlost", "A Daughter of the Land", and the one just published, "Her Father's Daughter".[2] The first of these, with all its nature lore, was rather too sentimental for me, and the third impossible; but I defy any unprejudiced person to read "A Daughter of the Land" to the end, without enthusiasm for the story. The style is so crude that one must determine not to be stopped by it; one must not quit. Apart from the lack of stylistic art, one will find an admirable story, with a real plot and real characters; nothing is shirked or softened in the course of the novel, and the heroine is a girl that holds one's attention, not merely by what happens to her, but by what she is. There is a certain grandeur in the conception of the tale, like a great architectural idea disguised by bad drawing. Furthermore, just now, when everybody thinks everybody else ought to be a farmer, this epic of the farm has a particular importance. Here was a girl who really loved the country; loved living on a farm; loved all kinds of agricultural work; loved to make and see things grow. And, as presented in the novel, this love is understandable and intelligible. There are not many such girls. But it would be well if there were more.

[2]Published by Doubleday, Page and Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Living all her life in daily contact with nature, there is an elemental force in Gene Stratton-Porter which partly accounts for the hitting power of her novels. But in her latest story, "Her Father's Daughter", her passion for the California mountains and deserts has made her neglect not only the graces of style but the reality of her supposedly human beings. Linda, the high school wonder, is an impossible person; and the contrast between her, as a child of nature, and her supposititious sister, Eileen, stands out too grossly. By far the best things in this book are the cooking receipts and the intimate facts about the desert. Here the reader feels like a child in the author's hands.

In addition to the literary shortcomings of this novel, it is sadly marred by anti-Japanese propaganda. Somebody in California has been stuffing our novelist, who is more gullible in international politics than in the study of nature. The villain of the story is a Japanese, who, enraged at losing his place at the head of his class in the high school, attempts to murder the boy who outpaced him, and is himself done to death by Katherine O'Donovan, the Strong Cook, otherwise the best character in the novel.

Despite my disappointment in "Her Father's Daughter", I shall read Gene Stratton-Porter's next novel. If she is not a literary artist, she is anyhow a wonderful woman. No one lives closer to nature than she; and her undoubted vigor comes partly from this contact.

But if one wishes to see the difference between girls that are made to fit a purpose, and a real girl—the difference between puppets and humanity—let one, after reading "Helen of the Old House", and "Her Father's Daughter", study with attention Booth Tarkington's "Alice Adams".

NIGHT OF THE TACIT-ABSOLVING

By Willard Wattles

BEE and blossom to cling to,
Bird and dim tree,
Crag for the roe-buck to spring to,
Rivers that run to the sea.

Strength of the mountain upbearing
Cloud on its crest,
Seal of your kiss I am wearing
Here on my breast.

Night of the tacit-absolving
Girdle of day,
Chalice of double-dissolving—
Love, have thy way.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WORST CHRISTMAS STORY

Another Adventure in the Career of Dove Dulcet

By Christopher Morley

WE had been down to an East Side settlement house on Christmas afternoon. I had watched my friend Dove Dulcet, in moth-riddled scarlet and cotton wool trimmings, play Santa Claus for several hundred adoring urchins and their parents. He has done this for many years, but I had never before seen him insist on the amiable eccentricity of returning uptown still wearing the regalia of the genial saint. But Dove is always unusual, and I thought—as did the others who saw him, in the subway and elsewhere—it was a rather kindly and innocent concession to the hilarity of the day.

When we had got back to his snug apartment he beamed at me through his snowy fringes of false whisker, and began rummaging in the tall leather boots of his costume. From each one he drew a bottle of chianti.

"From a grateful parent on Mulberry Street," he said. "My favorite bootlegger lives down that way, and I've been playing Santa to his innumerable children for a number of years. The garb attributed—quite inaccurately, I expect—to Saint Nicholas of Bari, has its uses. Even the keenest revenue agent would hardly think of holding up poor old Santa."

He threw off his trappings, piled some logs on the fire, and we sat down for our quiet annual celebration. Dove and I have got into the habit of spending Christmas together. We are both old bachelors, with no close family ties, and we greatly enjoy the occasion. It isn't wholly selfish, either, for we usually manage to spice our fun with a little unexpected charity in some of the less fortunate quarters of the town.

As my friend uncorked the wicker-bound bottles I noticed a great pile of Christmas mail on his table.

"Dove, you odd fish," I said. "Why don't you open your letters? I should have thought that part of the fun of Christmas is hurrying to look through the greetings from friends. Or do you leave them to the last, to give them greater savor?"

He glanced at the heap, with a curious expression on his face.

"The Christmas cards?" he said. "I postpone them as long as I possibly can. It's part of my penance."

"What on earth do you mean?"

He filled two glasses, passed one to me, and sat down beside the cheerful blaze.

"Here's luck, old man!" he said. "Merry Christmas!"

I drank with him, but something evasive in his manner impelled me to repeat my question.

"What a ferret you are, Ben!" he said. "Yes, I put off looking at the Christmas cards as long as I dare. I suppose I'll have to tell you. It's one of the few skeletons in my anatomy of melancholy that you haven't exhumed. It's a queer kind of Christmas story."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He reached over to the table, took up a number of the envelopes, and studied their handwritings. He tore them open one after another, and read the enclosed cards.

"As I expected," he said. "Look here, it's no use your trying to make copy out of this yarn. No editor would look at it. It runs counter to all the good old Christmas traditions."

"My dear Dove," I said, "if you've got a Christmas story that's 'different', you've got something that editors will pay double for."

"Judge for yourself," he said. From the cards in his lap he chose four and gave them to me. "Begin by reading those."

Completely mystified, I did so.

The first showed a blue bird perched on a spray of holly. The verse read:

Our greeting is "Merry Christmas!"
None better could we find,
And tho' you are now out of sight,
You're ever in our mind.

The second card said, below a snow scene of mid-Victorian characters alighting from a stage coach at the hospitable door of a country mansion:

Should you or your folk ever call at our door
You'll be welcome, we promise you,—nobody more;
We wish you the best of the Joy and Cheer
That can come with Christmas and last through the year!

The third, with a bright picture of three stout old gentlemen in scarlet waistcoats, tippling before an open fire:

Jolly old Yule, Oh the jolly old Yule
Blesses rich man and poor man and wise man and fool—
Be merry, old friend, in this bright winter weather,
And you'll Yule and I'll Yule, we'll all Yule together!

The fourth—an extremely ornate vellum leaflet, gilded with Oriental designs and magi on camels—ran thus:

I pray the prayer the Easterners do:
May the Peace of Allah abide with you—
Through days of labor and nights of rest
May the love of Allah make you blest.

"Well," I said, "of course I wouldn't call them great poetry, but the sentiments are generous enough. Surely it's the spirit in which they're sent that counts. It doesn't seem like you to make fun—"

Dulcet leaned forward. "Make fun?" he said. "Heavens, I'm not making fun of them. The ghastly thing is, I wrote those myself."

There was nothing to say, so I held my peace.

"You didn't know, I trust, that at one time I was regarded as the snappiest writer of greeting sentiments (so the trade calls them) in the business? That was long ago, but the sentiments themselves, and innumerable imitations of them, go merrily on. You see, out of the first ten cards that I picked up, four are my own composition. Can you imagine the horror of receiving, every Christmas, every New Year, every Easter, every birthday, every Hallowe'en, every Thanksgiving, cards most of which were written by yourself? And when I think of the honest affection with which those cards were chosen for me by my unsuspecting friends, and contrast their loving simplicity with—"

He broke off, and refilled the glasses.

"I told you," he said, "that this was the worst Christmas story in the world! But I must try to tell it a little better, at any rate. Well, it has some of the traditional ingredients.

"You remember the winter of the Great Panic—1906, wasn't it? I had a job in an office downtown, and was laid off. I applied everywhere for work,—nothing doing. I had been writing a little on the side, verses and skits for the newspapers, but I couldn't make enough that way to live

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on. I had an attic in an old lodging house on Gay Street. (The Village was still genuine then, no hokum about it.) I used to reflect on the irony of that name, Gay Street, when I was walking about trying not to see the restaurants, they made me feel so hungry. I still get a queer feeling in the pit of my stomach when I pass by Gonfarone's—there was a fine thick savor of spaghetti and lentil soup that used to float out from the basement as I went along Eighth Street.

"There was a girl in it too, of course. You'll smile when I tell you who she was. Peggy Cassell, who does the magazine covers. Yes, she's prosperous enough now—so are we all. But those were the days!

"It's the old bachelors who are the real sentimentalists, hey? But by Jove, how I adored that girl! She was fresh from upstate somewhere, studying at the League, and doing small illustrating jobs to make ends approach. I was as green and tender as she. I was only twenty-five, you know. To go up to what Peggy called her studio—which was only a bleak bedroom she shared with another girl—and smoke cigarettes and see her wearing a smock and watch her dab away at a thing she intended to be a 'portrait' of me, was my idea of high tide on the seacoast of Bohemia. Peggy would brew cocoa in a chafing dish and then the other girl would tactfully think of some errand, and we'd sit, timidly and uncomfortably, with our arms around each other, and talk about getting married some day, and prove by Cupid's grand old logarithms that two can live cheaper than one. I used to recite to her that ripping old song 'My Peggy is a young thing, And I'm not very auld', and it would knock us both cold.

"The worst of it was, poor Peggy was almost as hard up as I was. In fact, we were both so hard up that I'm amazed we didn't get married, which is what people usually do when they have absolutely no prospects. But with all her sweet sentiment Peggy had a streak of sound caution. And as a matter of fact, I think she was better off than I was, because she did get a small allowance from home. Anyway, I was nearly desperate, tearing my heart out over the thought of this brave little creature facing the world for the sake of her art, and so on. She complained of the cold, and I remember taking her my steamer rug off my own bed, telling her I was too warm. After that I used to shingle myself over with newspapers when I went to bed. It was bitter on Gay Street that winter.

"But I said this was a Christmas story. So it is. It began like this. About Hallowe'en I had a little poem in 'Life'—nothing of any account, but a great event to me, my first appearance in Big Time journalism. Well, one day I got a letter from a publisher in Chicago asking permission to reprint it on a card. He said also that my verses had just the right touch which was needed in such things, and that I could probably do some 'holiday greetings' for him. He would be glad to see some Christmas 'sentiments', he said, and would pay one dollar each for any he could use.

"You can imagine that it didn't take me long to begin tearing off 'sentiments', though I stipulated, as a last concession to my honor, that my name should not be used. There was no time to lose: it was now along in November, and these things—to be sold to the public for Christmas a year later—must be submitted as soon as possible so that they could be illus-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trated and ready for the salesmen to take on the road in January.

"Picture then, the young author of genial 'greeting cards', sitting ironically in the chilliest attic on Gay Street—a dim and draughty little elbow of the city—and attempting to ignite his wits with praise of the glowing hearth and the brandied pudding. The room was heated only by a small gas stove, one burner of which had been scientifically sealed by the landlady; an apparatus, moreover, in which asphyxia was the partner of warmth. When that sickly sweetish gust became too overpotent, see the author throw up the window and retire to bed, meditating under a mountain of news-print further applause of wintry joy and fellowship. I remember one sentiment—very likely it is among the pile on the table here: it is a great favorite—which went:

May blazing log and steaming bowl
And wreaths of mistletoe and holly
Remind you of a kindred soul
Whose love for you is warm and jolly!

"My, how cold it was the night I wrote that."

Dove paused, prodded the logs to a brighter flame, and leaned closer to the chimney as though feeling a reminiscent chill.

"Well, as Christmas itself drew nearer, I became more and more agitated. I had sent in dozens of these compositions; each batch was duly acknowledged, and highly praised. The publisher was pleased to say that I had a remarkable aptitude for 'greetings'; my Christmas line, particularly, he applauded as being full of the robust and hearty spirit of the old-fashioned Yule. My Easter touch, he felt, was a little thin and tepid by comparison. So I redoubled my metrical cheer. I piled the logs higher and higher upon my imaginary hearth; I bore in cups of steaming wassail; blizzards drummed at my baronial window panes; stage coaches were halted by drifts axle-deep; but within the circle of my mid-Victorian halloo, all was mirth: beauty crowded beneath the pale mistletoe; candles threw a tawny shine; the goose was carved and the port wine sparkled. And all the while, if you please, it was December of the panic winter; no check had yet arrived from the delighted publisher; I had laid aside other projects to pursue this golden phantom; I ate once a day, and sometimes kept warm by writing my mellow outbursts of gladness in the steam-heated lobbies of hotels.

"I had said nothing to Peggy about this professional assumption of Christmas heartiness. For one thing, I had talked to her so much, and with such youthful ardor, of my literary ambitions and ideals, that I feared her ridicule; for another, my most eager hope was to surprise her with an opulent Christmas present. She, poor dear, was growing a trifle threadbare too: she had spoken, now and then, of some sort of fur neckpiece she had seen in shop windows; this, no less, was my secret ambition. And so, as the streets grew brighter with the approach of the Day, and still the publisher delayed his remittance, I wrote him a masterly letter. It was couched in the form of a Christmas greeting from me to him; it acknowledged the validity of his contention that he had postponed a settlement because I was still submitting more and more masterpieces and he planned to settle *en bloc;* but it pointed out the supreme and tragic irony of my having to pass a Christmas in starvation and misery because I had spent so much time dispersing altruistic and factitious good will.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"As I waited anxiously for a reply, I was further disquieted by distressing behavior on Peggy's part. She had been rather strange with me for some time, which I attributed partly to my own shabby appearance and wretched preoccupation with my gruesome task. She had rallied me—some time before—on my mysterious mien, and I may have been clumsy in my retorts. Who can always know just the right accent with which to chaff a woman? At any rate, she had—with some suddenly assumed excuse of propriety—forbidden me the hospitality of her bedroom-studio; even my portrait (which we had so blithely imagined as a national triumph in future years when we both stood at the crest of our arts) had been discontinued. We wandered the streets together, quarrelsome and unhappy; we could agree about nothing. In spite of this, I nourished my hopeful secret, still believing that when my check came, and enabled me to mark the Day of Days with the coveted fur, all would be happier than ever.

"It was two days before Christmas, and you may elaborate the picture with all the traditional tints of Dickens pathos. It was cold and snowy and I was hungry, worried, and forlorn. I was walking along Eighth Street wondering whether I could borrow enough money to telegraph to Chicago. Just by the Brevoort I met Peggy, and to my chagrin and despair she was wearing a beautiful new fur neckpiece—a tippet, I think they used to call them in those days. She looked a different girl: her face was pink, her small chin nestled adorably into the fur collar, her eyes were bright and merry. Well, I was only human, and I guess I must have shown my wretched disappointment. Of course she hadn't known that I hoped to surprise her in just that way, and when I blurted out something to that effect, she spoke tartly.

"'You!' she cried. 'How could *you* buy me anything like that? I suppose you'd like me to tramp around in the snow all winter and catch my death of cold.'

"In spite of all the Christmas homilies I had written about good will and charity and what not, I lost my temper.

"'Ah,' I said bitterly, 'I see it all now! I wasn't prosperous enough, so you've found someone else who can afford to buy furs for you. That's why you've kept me away from the studio, eh? You've got some other chap on the string.'

"I can still see her little flushed face, rosy with wind and snow, looking ridiculously stricken as she stood on that wintry corner. She began to say something, but I was hot with the absurd rage of youth. All my weeks of degradation on Gay Street suddenly boiled up in my mind. I was grotesquely melodramatic and absurd.

"'A rich lover!' I sneered. 'Go ahead and take him! I'll stick to poverty and my ideals. You can have the furs and fleshpots!'

"Well, you never know how a woman will take things. To my utter amazement, instead of flaming up with anger, she burst into tears. But I was too proud and troubled to comfort her.

"'Yes, you're right,' she sobbed. 'I had such fine dreams, but I couldn't stick it out. I'm not worthy of your ideals. I guess I've sold myself.' She turned and ran away down the slippery street, leaving me flabbergasted.

"I walked around and around Washington Square, not knowing what to do. She had as good as admitted that she had thrown me over for some

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

richer man. And yet I didn't feel like giving her up without a struggle. Perhaps it all sounds silly now, but it was terribly real then."

"At last I went back to Gay Street. On the hall table was a letter from the publisher, with a check for fifty dollars. He had accepted fifty of the hundred or so pieces I had sent, and said if I would consider going to Chicago he would give me a position on his staff as Assistant Greeting Editor. He added a remark that stuck in my head. 'Get into a good sound business,' he wrote. 'There will never be a panic in the Greeting line.'

"When I read that letter I was too elated to worry about anything. I would be able to fix things with Peggy somehow. I would say to her, in a melting voice, 'My Peggy is a young thing', and she would tumble. She must love me still, or she wouldn't have cried. I rushed round to her lodging house, and went right upstairs without giving her a chance to deny me. I knocked, and when she came to the door she looked frightened and ill. She tried to stop me, but I burst in and waved the letter in front of her.

"'Look at this, Peggy darling!' I shouted. 'We're going to be rich and infamous. I didn't tell you what I was doing, because I was afraid you'd be ashamed of me, after all my talk about high ideals. But anything is better than starving and freezing on Gay Street, or doing without the furs that pretty girls need.'

"She read the letter, and looked up at me with the queerest face.

"'Now no more nonsense about the other man,' I said. 'I'll buy you a fur for Christmas that'll put his among camphor balls. Who is he, anyway?'

"She surprised me again, for this time she began to laugh.

"'It's the same one,' she said. 'I mean, the same publisher—your friend in Chicago. Oh Dove, I've been doing drawings for Christmas cards, and I think they must be yours.'

"It was true. Her poor little cold studio was littered with sketches for Christmas drawings—blazing fires and ruddy Georgian squires with tankards of hissing ale and girls in sprigged muslin being coy under the mistletoe. And when she showed me the typewritten verses the publisher had sent her to illustrate, they were mine, sure enough. She had had her check a day sooner than I, and had rushed off to buy herself the fur her heart yearned for.

"'I was so ashamed of doing the work,' she said—with her head on my waistcoat—'that I didn't dare tell you.'"

Dove sighed, and leaned back in his chair. A drizzle of rain and sleet tinkled on the window pane, but the fire was a core of rosy light.

"Not much of a Christmas story, eh?" he said. "Do you wonder, now, that I hesitate to look again at the cards I wrote and Peggy illustrated?"

"But what happened?" I asked. "It seems a nice enough story as far as you've gone."

"Peggy was a naughty little hypocrite," he said. "I found out that she wasn't really ashamed of illustrating my 'greetings', at all. She thought they were lovely. She honestly did. And presently she told me she simply couldn't marry a man who would capitalize Christmas. She said it was too sacred."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHINESE LYRICS
BY TU MU
TRANSLATED BY WITTER BYNNER AND KIANG KANG HU

I CLIMB TO LOOK-OUT CEMETERY[1] BEFORE LEAVING FOR WU-HSING[2]

I could serve in a good reign, but not now.
The lone cloud rather, the Buddhist peace...
Once more—and then off beyond river and sea—
I climb to the Tomb of Emperor Chao.[3]

BY THE PURPLE CLIFF[4]

On a part of a spear undecayed in the sand
I burnish the sign of an ancient kingdom...
Spring, if the wind had not aided Chou Yü,
Would have fastened both Ch'iao girls in Copper-Bird Palace.

NOTE: *Explanatory notes to these poems will be found in the Contributors' Column.*

WTS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A MOORING ON THE CH'IN-HUAI RIVER[1]

Mist veils the cold stream and moonlight the sand
As I moor in the shadow of a river-tavern,
Where girls, unminding a perished kingdom,
Echo the Song of the Courtyard Flowers.[2]

A LETTER TO HAN CHO THE YANG-CHOU MAGISTRATE

There are faint green mountains and far green waters,
And South-River grasses unfaded with autumn,
While, clear in the moon on the twenty-four bridges,[3]
Girls, white as jade, are teaching flute-music.

A STATEMENT

With my wine-bottle, looking by river and lake
For an exquisite lady to dance on my palm,
I wake, after dreaming ten years in Yang-chou,
Known as fickle, that's all, in the Street of Blue Houses.[4]

W.T.S.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE AUTUMN NIGHT

Silver shines the candle on my chill bright screen
And my little silk fan is for fireflies,
While I watch, from my moon-soaked ice-cold steps,
The River of Heaven parting two stars.[1]

PARTING

I

She is slim and supple and just thirteen,
The young spring-tip of a cardamom-spray.
Ten li to the wind the Yang-chou Road
Opens all its pearl-screens; but none are like her.

II

How can a deep love seem deep love,
How can it smile, at a farewell feast?
Even the candle, feeling our woe,
Weeps, as we do, all night long.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GARDEN OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY[1]

Stories of passion make sweet dust,
Calm water, grasses unconcerned.
At sunset, when birds cry in the wind,
Like a girl's robe fall the petals.

A NIGHT AT AN INN

With no companions at the inn,
I concentrate my lonely pain
And under the cold lamp think of the past
And am kept awake by a lost wild-goose[2]*...*
Out of a misty dream at dawn,
I read, a year late, news from home
And remember the moon like smoke on the river
And a fisher-boat moored there, under my door.

W.T.S.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHAT ABOUT MOTION PICTURES?

A Reply

By Rt. Hon. Sir Gilbert Parker

IT is easy to throw stones. Anyone can do it. It is an industry not an art. The article in THE BOOKMAN of November in which motion pictures are attacked describes motion pictures as an industry not an art, and the author throws it about like stones. His sweeping would-be destructive assault will not injure motion pictures. If the writer had permitted himself further knowledge and more careful consideration he would have avoided some of his bitter pessimistic statements. Pessimism is the easiest resort of the mind shocked by what it sees with too much vividness and realism. One result of the late war was to make everyone anxious, and some it has made tragically pessimistic. That I think is so with the author of the article in THE BOOKMAN.

Most people will agree with him as to the large number of bad films. It is apparent to all with what he calls a "mental flicker" but how few careful-minded people will agree with his general conclusions! In the earlier part of his article he condemns all who produce motion pictures. They are called "a commercial and speculative enterprise and nothing more", "a cheap and gaudy piece of merchandise"; and we are told that if they were all "censored off the face of the earth,...the only effect upon the intelligence and art of the country would be one of lasting benefit". And what a poor opinion of the people of his own country is shown in this: "It was and is the mirror of the aspirations of a peculiarly unimaginative, repressed, and mentally starved people, a people who have in the overwhelming main been taught to value only a devitalizing and despiritualizing material success, arrived at by a curious duality of ethical teaching and practice."

I look around me, and I see the American people, great in commerce and industry, leading the world in applied science with a gift for vast organization; a people so dominant that it has admitted a million immigrants a year and absorbed them and made the mass of them good Americans; a nation that has never been defeated in war; which has a social life of magnificent fineness and vitality; a national scheme of existence of rare merit in comparison with all other nations, and with a gift of imagination which even the most critical foreigners admit; and this people is called "unimaginative, repressed, and mentally starved". Could a foe of the American people say worse?

Then the writer becomes explicit regarding the "reputable authors" who have at times yielded to the importunities of the movie producers. These are the sort who "have either ostensibly or actually taken the attitude that there is no help for the situation, that the movies are an institution by illiterates, of illiterates, and for illiterates, and pocketed the easy money". Isn't it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sweeping and dark-spirited and harsh on people like Rex Beach and Rupert Hughes, Mary Roberts Rinehart and Gertrude Atherton, Ralph Connor (a Presbyterian minister) and Zane Grey, James Oliver Curwood, Samuel Merwin, and other "reputable authors" who have given their books to the film and written original stories for the film stage? And as for England, look at Sir James Barrie and Edward Knoblock, Somerset Maugham and Arnold Bennett, Robert Hichens and Elinor Glyn, Henry Arthur Jones and Pinero, most of whom have written direct for the screen stage, and all of whom have given their books and plays for adaptation. Also Maeterlinck and D'Annunzio. These are people who debase themselves by losing all sense of honor or of art and "pocketing easy money".

We are also told that American writers are planning their new books with a view to screen production. Oh, gentle kindly critic, what a simple faith in the "reputable authors" of the English-speaking world! I am a British author. Ten of my books have been filmed, and let me say that the author of the article in THE BOOKMAN is wrong when he says that not one scenario has been produced in this country for a motion picture with a significant idea. Here is his charge: "In almost every instance where good novels and plays and short stories have been drawn upon for movie material, the ideas have been distorted and sentimentalized out of all recognition." Could anything be more out of touch with fact! The first thing a first-class motion picture producer asks is, "What is your theme?" He wants a "significant idea". He insists on it. I am speaking of the great firms—Lasky, Goldwyn, Metro, and others. It is the theme they want primarily and before all. Is there no significant idea in one of Barrie's plays—in "What Every Woman Knows" and "Sentimental Tommy", two first-class films? The former picture was produced by William De Mille, formerly a dramatist of note and the son of a dramatist, with whom is associated at Lasky's Thompson Buchanan and Elmer Harris, both dramatists, and Douglas Doty, former editor of "The Century" magazine. At Goldwyn's is Rupert Hughes, now *producing* his own films, and Clayton Hamilton, a lecturer of English literature in Columbia University, and others of note. Rita Weiman has written for both Goldwyn and Famous Players. And these are all selling their souls for "easy money"! Two films done from books of mine were successes last year and this year—"The Right of Way" and "Behold My Wife!" (done from "The Translation of a Savage")—and the public will agree that they were faithful reproductions of the main idea of both books and were altered very little. Indeed it was the public which decided what the end of "The Right of Way" should be, for the Metro made two endings, a happy and a so-called unhappy ending—that is, the ending of the book—and the *exhibitors* insisted on the book ending. I only mention this to substantiate my point. I can indicate a hundred films within my own knowledge where there is a main idea carried out with power and simplicity and fidelity to the author's text. What about the plays that have been dramatized? Have they all been mangled? We know they have not. Was "Madame X" mangled?

After a long and malevolent attack—no doubt honest—on the motion pictures, the author of the article says: "American motion picture producers have shown excellence in only two

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fields, that of satiric and farce comedy, and in exploiting the beauty and health, the freshness and naïveté of American girlhood." This is in strange contrast to "a collaboration of hack fictionists, illiterate continuity writers, vainglorious directors, simpering flappers, and strutting pomade addicts", of which he speaks in his earlier paragraphs. In the first part of his article he says: "The outlook, indeed, is dim. Everything makes not only for the statically uncompromising condition of the average man but for his actual debasement.... His narrow and material predilections are not only recognized for what they are; they are systematically exploited and debauched."

It is plain to be seen that the writer cannot be judged fairly by his own statements. They are contradictory, badly argued, and dangerous—dangerous to people who do not know the motion picture world and who regard it as a "sink of iniquity". He says that no distinguished actors or actresses have joined the film-stage. What about John Barrymore, Elsie Ferguson, George Arliss, the Farnums, Pauline Frederick, William Faversham, and in England Matheson Lang and many others? Is the film world so barren of artistic talent? At the end of his article, after stating that there is no art in the American motion pictures, he says: "The German films, 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' and 'The Golem', and various French and Italian projects show a tendency abroad to grasp the particular problem of the movies and to evolve an art form peculiar to that medium." Does anyone who saw "Dr. Caligari" think it shows more art than "Broken Blossoms" or "The Whispering Chorus" by Cecil B. De Mille? It shows some wonderful effects in lighting and distance, but no more than such men as the De Milles and Griffith and others know.

The author is rather hopeless of his own country, but I am not. I have given a year of my life at Hollywood studying the film industry. No one influences my judgment. It is independent. I will say this without fear of being proven wrong, that the life at Hollywood compares most favorably with life in all places where industry and art are at work, and I am convinced that even now motion pictures are an industry *and* an art. Penrhyn Stanlaws, an art illustrator of fame, is now with the Famous Players, and that he would be in a concern which is only an industry does not bear consideration.

I agree with the author of the article, and I have said it often enough, that seventy-five per cent of the films are bad, and that the proportion of masterpieces is small, but how old is the film industry? It dates back not more than twenty years, and what is expected in that time? It was Mr. Zukor, I think, who first proposed the five-reel film, and he was laughed at for his vision; but he was right. It is only a few years since close-ups were first used, and motion pictures have been developing with marvelous skill and power in the recent past. One need not look for too much all at once. This new industry and art has gone wonderfully ahead since the day of the nickelodeons. I am convinced of this, that the chief film producers are as earnest in making good films as any writer or any critic or any citizen of the country. But no sneers must be hurled at film producers because they want money to develop their work. Money is needed for both industry and art.

After all it is the public that decide,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and if the public demand better pictures they will get them. I repudiate wholly "the fourteen year old intelligence" of the average attendant at the films. I look round me at the motion picture theatres and ask myself if the average intelligence is fourteen years. I am deeply convinced it is not. A phrase is so easy to make and so few phrases are honest in fact. It's like that phrase "too old at forty", while the greatest achievements in the world have been made by men well over forty. I have small faith in phrases. As a rule they are manufactured for effects of wit and brilliancy. Looking back at my year at Hollywood, I can say with truth that I am convinced that producers of the better sort—and all producers in the theatres and music halls are not of the better sort—are anxious to exhibit good artistic films. Take the last two great successes: "The Three Musketeers" and "Little Lord Fauntleroy"—are they not clean and good in presentation? Have they not ideas, and are not those ideas presented on the screen? Is it to be supposed that Edward Knoblock, a famous playwright, would lend his name —he a dramatist and an authority on French history and costume—to a piece of "hokum"? He did not, and "Little Lord Fauntleroy" is as legitimate on the film stage as in the book or Mrs. Hodgson Burnett would not have allowed it to be produced. Douglas Fairbanks invested in "The Three Musketeers" against the advice of many who said costume films will not pay, and his vast risk has paid him well as all the world knows. To his credit he has made two great films in one year, "The Mark of Zorro" and "The Three Musketeers", and Mary Pickford, a rare and most talented actress of the film, has never produced an unworthy picture. Modesty and earnestness and fine ambition are the dominant characteristics of these people, and Rupert Hughes's recent film, "The Old Nest", is a guarantee of high purpose and domestic truth.

I can see in the past year a marked increase in good films, and the great film producers mean to give them and are now trying hard to do so. I know the inside and outside of the chief studios of Los Angeles and Hollywood and I firmly state that there is as high an average of intelligence and wholesome living and commendable conditions to produce good artistic work as in any other section of artistic life. One bad case goes into court and a cry goes up that the whole industry and art is tainted, but that is not said when some alarming and degrading event occurs in social life. An individual case must not be taken as the estimate of the whole, or how long would the world last? If as the author of the article asserts, "the fourteen year old intelligence" in a state of arrested development with its "sinister burden of prejudices, taboos, neuroses, and superstitions" is responsible among other things for "the laws for the minorities" and "specifies the sort of education the succeeding generation shall have", then I think it is not so bad a fourteen year old intelligence, for there are good laws and there is a very good system of education in this country. If there are good laws and a good system of education I refuse to believe that in a country which has these things the film industry is on the downward path.

Who frequent the films? The best average minds of the country. Who attend the films shown in schools and Sunday schools? The best religious minds of the country, not debased or degraded intelligences. Who are ministering in motion pictures to all these

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

people? The film producers who are giving the public increasingly good films. Pessimism is a disease, optimism is a virtue, and I am on the side of virtue where the films are concerned. The state and the public are those who decide what films may be produced, and no glowing articles in magazines can make the public believe that the film world is either short-lived or is on the way to doom. It cannot and will not destroy a taste for the speaking stage, but it develops a dramatic sense and motion pictures have given education to the masses. It is not through the plays done on the film stage. They make up about two-thirds of the whole evening's entertainment; there are shown also interesting pictures in animal and scientific life, in geography and in the costumes and customs of countries. I am a fairly well educated man, but I have learned much from the films. It is too easy learning, is it? Well, is it better to learn easily or not at all? Let us have faith. The film industry and art has come to stay. Believe in it and help it, encourage it and improve it, but in improving it do not impulsively and ungraciously belittle it. Suppose a film costs a million dollars— that goes out in work and wages and goods, and if it makes five million dollars that reaches the public again in due time. The film producers are not fools. They will give the public what it demands, and in the end the public is always right. They find out the truth and they live up to it.

The film world is a world in the making; give it a fair chance and it will justify itself. Men like Charlie Chaplin, a genius, are getting away from slapstick comedy and farce, as "The Kid" plainly shows; and Charlie Chaplin is proving he is a master-actor in comedy which includes pathos and wit and humor. Douglas Fairbanks also is moving steadily upward. Both are producers as well as actors—give them and give the whole film world a living opportunity. This immense business is a part of the people's life; help it by fair criticism, uphold it with faith and hope. It has come to stay.

TRIUMPH

By Joseph Andrew Galahad

I SAW three wondrous things today—
I saw the sun set in the sea:
I saw an apple tree in bloom:
I saw a mill upon the Dee.

And all I viewed the long night through
Within my four walls smug and gall,
Was sun and sea, and apple tree,
And turning wheel and water fall!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HERMAN MELVILLE

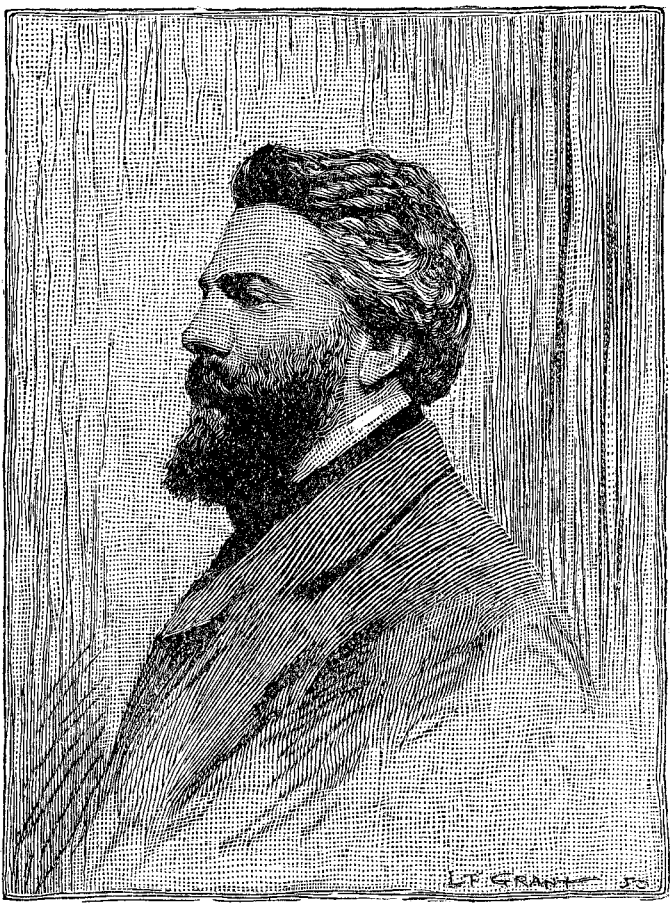
By Raymond M. Weaver

With an Engraving on Wood from an Old Photograph by L. F. Grant

IF ever, my dear Hawthorne," wrote Melville in the summer of 1851, "we shall sit down in Paradise in some little shady corner by ourselves; and if we shall by any means be able to smuggle a basket of champagne there (I won't believe in a Temperance Heaven); and if we shall then cross our celestial legs in the celestial grass that is forever tropical, and strike our glasses and our heads together till both ring musically in concert: then, O my dear fellow mortal, how shall we pleasantly discourse of all the things manifold which now so much distress us." This serene and laughing desolation—a mood which in Melville alternated with a deepening and less tranquil despair—is a spectacle to inspire with sardonic optimism those who gloat over the vanity of human wishes. For though at that time Melville was only thirty-two years old, he had crowded into that brief space of life a scope of experience to rival Ulysses's, and a literary achievement of a magnitude and variety to merit all but the highest fame. Still did he luxuriate in tribulation. Well-born, and nurtured in good manners and a cosmopolitan tradition, he was, like George Borrow and Sir Richard Burton, a gentleman adventurer in the barbarous outposts of human experience. Nor was his a kid-gloved and expensively staged dip into studio savagery. "For my part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind whatsoever," he declared. And as proof of this abomination he went forth penniless as a common sailor to view the watery world. He spent his youth and early manhood in the forecastles of a merchantman, several whalers, and a man-of-war. He diversified whale-hunting by a sojourn of four months among practising cannibals, and a mutiny off Tahiti. He returned home to New England to marry the daughter of Chief Justice Shaw of Massachusetts, and to win wide distinction as a novelist on both sides of the Atlantic. Though these crowded years had brought with them bitter hardship and keen suffering, he had sown in tears that he might reap in triumph. But when he wrote to Hawthorne he felt that triumph had not been achieved. Yet he needed but one conclusive gesture to provoke the world to cry this as a lie in his throat: one last sure sign to convince all posterity that he was, indeed, one whom the gods loved. But the gods fatally withheld their sign for forty years. Melville did not die until 1891.

None of Melville's critics seems ever to have been able to forgive him his length of days. "Some men die too soon," said Nietzsche, "others too late; there is an art in dying at the right time." Melville's longevity has done deep harm to his reputation as an artist in dying, and has obscured the phenomenal brilliancy of his early literary accomplishment. The last forty years of his history are a record of a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Herman Melville

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stoical—and sometimes frenzied—distaste for life, a perverse and sedulous contempt for recognition, an interest in solitude, in etchings and in metaphysics. In his writings after 1851 he employed a world of pains to scorn the world: a compliment returned in kind. During the closing years of his life he violated the self-esteem of the world still more by rating it as too inconsequential for condemnation. He earned his living between 1866 and 1886 as inspector of customs in New York City. His deepest interest came to be in metaphysics: which is but misery dissolved in thought. It may be, to the all-seeing eye of truth, that Melville's closing years were the most glorious of his life. But to the mere critic of literature, his strange career is like a star that drops a line of streaming fire down the vault of the sky—and then the dark and blasted shape that sinks into the earth.

There are few more interesting problems in biography than this offered by Melville's paradoxical career: its brilliant early achievement, its long and dark eclipse. Unhampered by diffidence—because innocent of the essential facts—critics of Melville have been fluent in hypotheses to account for this "complete change". A German critic patriotically lays the blame to Kant. English-speaking critics, with insular pride, have found a sufficiency of disruptive agencies nearer at home. Some impute Melville's decline to Sir Thomas Browne; others to Melville's intimacy with Hawthorne; others to the dispraise heaped upon "Pierre". Though there is a semblance of truth in each, such attempts at explanation are, of course, too shallow and neat to merit reprobation. But there is another group of critics, too considerable in size and substance to be so cavalierly dismissed. This company accounts for Melville's swift obscuration in a summary and comprehensive manner, by intimating that Melville went insane.

Such an intimation is doubtless highly efficacious to mediocrity in bolstering its own self-esteem. But otherwise it is without precise intellectual content. For insanity is not a definite entity like leprosy, measles, and the bubonic plague, but even in its most precise use, denotes a conglomerate group of phenomena which have but little in common. Science, it is true, speaking through Nordau and Lombroso, has attempted to show an intimate correlation between genius and degeneracy; and if the creative imagination of some of the disciples of Freud is to be trusted, the choir invisible is little more than a glorified bedlam. Plato would have accepted this verdict with approval. "From insanity", said Plato, "Greece has derived its greatest benefits." But the dull and decent Philistine, untouched by Platonic heresies, justifies his sterility in a boast of sanity. The America in which Melville was born and died was exuberantly and unquestionably "sane". Its "sanity" drove Irving abroad and made a recluse of Hawthorne. Cooper throve upon it. And of Melville, more ponderous in gifts and more volcanic in energy than any other American writer, it made an Ishmael upon the face of the earth. With its outstanding symptoms of materialism and conformity it drove Emerson to pray for an epidemic of madness:

> O Celestial Bacchus! drive them mad.—This multitude of vagabonds, hungry for eloquence, hungry for poetry, starving for symbols, perishing for want of electricity to vitalise this too much pasture, and in the long delay indemnifying themselves with the false wine of alcohol, of politics, of money.

From this it would appear that a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taste for insanity has been widespread among poets, prophets and saints: men venerated more by posterity than by their neighbors. It is well for Socrates that Xantippe did not write his memoirs: but there was sufficient libel in hemlock. In ancient and mediæval times, of course, madness, when not abhorred as a demoniac possession, was revered as a holy and mysterious visitation. Today, witch-burning and canonization have given place to more refined devices. The herd must always be intolerant of all who violate its sacred and painfully reared traditions. With an easy conscience it has always exterminated in the flesh those who sin in the flesh. In times less timid than the present it dealt with sins of the spirit with similar crude vindictiveness. We boast it as a sign of our progress that we have outgrown the days of jubilant public crucifixions and bumpers of hemlock: and there is ironic justice in the boast. Openly to harbor convictions repugnant to the herd is still the unforgivable sin against that most holy of ghosts—fashionable opinion; and carelessly to let live may be more cruel than officiously to cause to die.

Melville sinned blackly against the orthodoxy of his time. In his earlier works, he confined his sins to an attack upon missionaries and the starchings of civilizations: sins that won him a *succès de scandale*. The London Missionary Society charged into the resulting festivities with its flag at half mast. Cased in the armor of the Lord, it with flagrant injustice attacked his morals, because it smarted under his ideas. But when Melville began flooding the very foundations of life with torrents of corrosive pessimism, the world at large found itself more vulnerable in its encasement. It could not, without absurdity obvious even to itself, accuse Melville of any of the cruder crimes against Jehovah or the Public. Judged by the bungling provisions of the thirty-nine articles and the penal code, he was not a bad man: more subtle was his iniquity. As by a divine visitation, the Harper fire of 1853 effectually reduced "Pierre"—his most frankly poisonous book—to a safely limited edition. And the public, taking the hint, ceased buying his books. In reply, Melville earned his bread as inspector of customs. The public, defeated in its righteous attempts at starvation, hit upon a more exquisite revenge. It gathered in elegiacal synods and whispered mysteriously: "He went insane."

To view Melville's life as a venturesome romantic idyl frozen in mid-career by the *deus ex machina* of some steadily descending Gorgon is possible only by a wanton misreading of patent facts. Throughout Melville's long life his warring and untamed desires were in violent conflict with his physical and spiritual environments. His whole history is the record of an attempt to escape from an inexorable and intolerable world of reality: a quenchless and essentially tragic Odyssey away from home, out in search of "the unpeopled world behind the sun". In the blood and bone of his youth he sailed away in brave quest of such a harbor, to face inevitable defeat. For this rebuff he sought both solace and revenge in literature. But by literature he also sought his livelihood. In the first burst of literary success he married. Held closer to reality by financial worry and the hostages of wife and children, the conflict within him was heightened. By a vicious circle, with brooding disappointment came ill health. "Ah, muskets the gods have made to carry infinite combustion," he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wrote in "Pierre", "and yet made them of clay." The royalties from his books proved inadequate for the support of his family, so for twenty years he earned a frugal living in the custom houses in New York. During his leisure hours he continued to write, but never for publication. Two volumes of poetry he privately printed. His last novel, surviving in manuscript, he finished a few months before his death. Though it is the second half that his critics have felt bound to regret, it seems that in serenity and mental equipoise, the last state of the man was better than the first.

It has been our tradition to cherish our literature for its embodiment of Queen Victoria's fireside qualities. The repudiation of this tradition—as a part of our repudiation of all tradition—has made fashionable a wholesale contempt for our native product. "I can't read Longfellow," is frequently remarked; "he's so subtle!" Our critical estimates have labored under the incubus of New England provincialism: a provincialism preserved in miniature in the first pages of Lowell's essay on Thoreau. At present we need to have the eminence of the section recalled to us; but during the period of Melville's productivity, it was at its apex, and in its bosom Melville wrote. This man, whose closest literary affinities were Rabelais, Zola, Sir Thomas Browne, Rousseau, Meredith, and Dr. John Donne,—a combination to make the uninitiated blink with incredulity,—was indebted to Nathaniel Hawthorne for the best makeshift for companionship he was ever to know: one of the most subtly ironical associations the imps of comedy ever brought about. Nor was the comedy lessened by Mrs. Hawthorne's presence upon the scene. Shrewd was her instinctive resentment of her husband's friend. Viewed by his neighbors "as little better than a cannibal and a 'beach comber'"—such was the report of the late Titus Munson Coan in a letter to his mother written immediately after a pilgrimage to Melville in the Berkshires—Melville turned to Hawthorne for understanding. Frank Preston Stearns, in his "Life and Genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne" (1906) says that for Hawthorne "the summer of 1851 in Lenox was by no means brilliant.... Hawthorne's chief entertainment seems to have been the congratulatory letters he received from distinguished people....For older company he had Herman Melville and G. P. R. James, whose society he may have found as interesting as that of more distinguished writers." But Mrs. Hawthorne had studied Melville with a closer scrutiny and was not so easily convinced of Melville's insignificance. Melville had visited the Hawthornes in the tiny reception room of the Red House, where Mrs. Hawthorne "sewed at her stand and read to the children about Christ"; in the drawing room, where she disposed "the embroidered furniture" and where, in the farther corner, stood "Apollo with his head tied on"; in Hawthorne's study, which to Mrs. Hawthorne's wifely adoration was consecrated by "his presence in the morning". Mrs. Hawthorne looked from the "wonderful, wonderful eyes" of her husband—each eye "like a violet with a soul in it"—to Melville's eyes, and confessed to her mother her grave and jealous suspicion of Melville:

> I am not quite sure that *I do not think him* a very great man....A man with a true, warm heart, and a soul and an intellect,—with life to his finger-tips; earnest, sincere and reverent; very tender and *modest*....He has very keen perceptive power; but what astonishes me is, that his eyes are not large and deep. He seems to see everything very accurately; and how he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can do so with his small eyes, I cannot tell. They are not keen eyes, either, but quite undistinguished in any way. His nose is straight and rather handsome, his mouth expressive of sensibility and emotion. He is tall, and erect, with an air free, brave, and manly. When conversing, he is full of gesture and force, and loses himself in his subject. There is no grace nor polish. Once in a while, his animation gives place to a singularly quiet expression, out of these eyes to which I have objected; an indrawn, dim look, but which at the same time makes you feel that he is at that moment taking deepest note of what is before him. It is a strange, lazy glance, but with a power in it quite unique. It does not seem to penetrate through you, but to take you into itself. I saw him look at Una so, yesterday, several times.

Mrs. Hawthorne must ever enjoy a lofty eminence as one of Melville's most penetrating critics. Her husband dwelt apart, and less because he found the atmosphere of New England wholly uncongenial than because he shared his wife's conviction that he was like a star. And shrewdly his wife resented the presence of a second luminary—treacherously veiled and of heaven knows what magnitude!—in her serene New England sky. Time may yet harp her worst fears aright.

For despite his comparative obscurity, Melville is—as cannot be too frequently iterated—one of the greatest and most unusual geniuses of our native literature. And his claim to such high distinction must rest upon three prime counts.

First—because most obvious—Melville was the literary discoverer of the South Seas. And though his ample and rapidly multiplying progeny includes such names as Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Warren Stoddard, John La Farge, Jack London, Louis Becke, A. Safroni-Middleton, Somerset Maugham, and Frederick O'Brien, he is still unsurpassed in the manner he originated. On this point, all competent critics are agreed.

Melville's second achievement is most adequately stated by the well-known English sea writer, W. Clark Russell, in "A Claim of American Literature" (reprinted from "The North American Review" in "The Critic" for March 26, 1892).

When Richard Henry Dana, and Herman Melville wrote, the commercial sailor of great Britain and the United States was without representation in literature....Dana and Melville were Americans. They were the first to lift the hatch and show the world what passes in a ship's forecastle; how men live down in that gloomy cave, how and what they eat, and where they sleep; what pleasures they take, what their sorrows and wrongs are; how they are used when they quit their black sea-parlors in response to the boatswain's silver summons to work on deck by day and by night. These secrets of the deep Dana and Melville disclosed. ...Dana and Melville created a new world, not by the discovery, but by the interpretation of it. They gave us a full view of the life led by tens of thousands of men whose very existence, till these wizards arose, had been as vague to the general land intelligence as the shadows of clouds moving under the brightness of the stars.

And to Melville and Dana, so Russell contends, we owe "the first, the best and most enduring revelation of these secrets". On this score, Conrad, Kipling, and Masefield must own Melville as master.

Melville's third and supreme claim to distinction rests upon a single volume, which, after the order of Melchizedek, is without issue and without descent: "a work which is not only unique in its kind, and a great achievement", to quote a recent judgment from England, "but is the expression of an imagination that rises to the highest, and so is amongst the world's great works of art." This book is, of course, "Moby Dick", Melville's undoubted masterpiece. "In that wild, beautiful romance"—the words are Mr. Masefield's—"Melville seems to have spoken the very secret of the sea, and to have drawn into his tale all the magic, all the sadness, all the wild joy of many waters. It stands quite alone; quite unlike any other book

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

known to me. It strikes a note which no other sea writer has ever struck."

The organizing theme of this unparalleled volume is the hunt by the mad Captain Ahab after the great white whale which had dismembered him of his leg; of Captain Ahab's unwearied pursuit by rumor of its whereabouts; of the final destruction of himself and his ship by its savage onslaught. On the white hump of the ancient and vindictive monster Captain Ahab piles the sum of all the rage and hate of mankind from the days of Eden down.

Melville expresses an ironical fear lest his book be scouted "as a monstrous fable, or still worse and more detestable, a hideous and intolerable allegory". Yet fabulous allegory it is: an allegory of the demonism at the cankered heart of nature, teaching that "though in many of its visible aspects the world seems formed in love, the invisible spheres were formed in fright". Thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make you mad. To the eye of truth, so Melville would convince us, "the palsied universe lies before us as a leper"; "all deified Nature absolutely paints like a harlot, whose allurements cover nothing but the charnal house within". To embody this devastating insight, Melville chooses as a symbol, an albino whale. "Wonder ye then at the fiery hunt?"

An artist who goes out to find sermons in stones does so at the peril of converting his stone pile into his mausoleum. His danger is excessive, if, having his sermons all ready, he makes it his task to find the stones to fit them. Allegory justifies itself only when the fiction is the fact and the moral the induction; only when its representation is as imaginatively real as its meaning; only when the stones are interesting boulders in a rich and diversified landscape. So broadly and vividly is "Moby Dick" based on solid foundation that even the most literal-minded, innocent of Melville's dark intent, have found this book of the soul's daring and the soul's dread a very worthy volume. One spokesman for this congregation, while admitting that "a certain absorption of interest lies in the nightmare intensity and melodramatic climax of the tale", finds his interest captured and held far more by

> the exposition of fact with which the story is loaded to the very gunwale. No living thing on earth or in the waters under the earth is so interesting as the whale. How it is pursued, from the Arctic to the Antarctic; how it is harpooned, to the peril of boat and crew; how, when brought to the side, "cutting in" is accomplished; how the whale's anatomy is laid bare; how his fat is redeemed—to be told this in the form of a narrative, with all manner of dramatic but perfectly plausible incidents interspersed, is enough to make the book completely engrossing without the white whale and Captain Ahab's fatal monomania.

In "Moby Dick", all the powers and tastes of Melville's complex genius are blended. "Moby Dick" is at once indisputably the greatest whaling novel, and "a hideous and intolerable allegory". It is, as Frank Jewett Mather, Jr. has said, "Kipling before the letter crossed with Sir Thomas Browne. Out of the mere episodes and minor instances of 'Moby Dick', a literary reputation might be made. The retired Nantucket captains Bildad and Peleg might have stepped out of Smollett. Father Mapple's sermon on the book of Jonah is in itself a masterpiece, and I know few sea tales that can hold their own with the blood feud of Mate Radney and sailor Steelkilt." Captain Hook of "Peter Pan" is but Captain Boomer of "Moby Dick" with another name: and this an identity founded not on surmise, but on Sir James Barrie's professed indebtedness

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to Melville. There are, in "Moby Dick", long digressions, natural, historical, and philosophical, on the person, habits, manners, and ideas of whales; there are long dialogues and soliloquies such as were never spoken by mortal man in his waking senses, conversations that for sweetness, strength and courage remind one of passages from Dekker, Webster, Massinger, Fletcher, and the other old dramatists loved by Charles Lamb; in the discursive traditon of Fielding, Sir Thomas Browne, and the anatomist of melancholy, Melville indulges freely in independent moralizings, half essay, half rhapsody; withal, scenes like Ishmael's experience at the Spouter-Inn with a practising cannibal for bedfellow, are, for finished humor, among the most competent in the language. When Melville sat down to write, always at his knee stood that chosen emissary of Satan, the comic spirit: a demoniac familiar never long absent from his pages.

The astonishing variety of contradictory qualities synthesized in "Moby Dick" exists nowhere else in literature, perhaps, in such paradoxical harmony. These qualities, in differences of combination and emphasis, are discoverable, however, in all of Melville's writings. And he published, besides anonymous contributions to periodicals, ten novels and five volumes of poetry (including the two volumes privately printed at the very close of his life). There survives, too, a bulk of manuscript material: a novel, short stories, and a body of verse. And branded on everything that Melville wrote is there the mark of the extraordinary personality that created "Moby Dick".

Though some of Melville's writing is distinctly disquieting in devastating insight, and much of it is very uneven in inspiration, none of it is undistinguished. Yet only four of his books have ever been reprinted. The rest of his work, long since out of print, is excessively rare, some of it being practically unavailable. The scarcity of a book, however, is not invariably a sign of its insignificance. It is one of the least accessible of Melville's books that Mr. Masefield singles out for especial distinction. "The book I love best of his", says Mr. Masefield, "is one very difficult to come by. I think it is his first romance, and I believe it has never been reprinted here. It is the romance of his own boyhood. I mean 'Redburn'. Any number of good pens will praise the known books, 'Typee' and 'Omoo' and 'Moby Dick' and 'White Jacket', and will tell their qualities of beauty and romance. Perhaps 'Redburn' will have fewer praises, so here goes for 'Redburn'; a boy's book about running away to sea." Even more difficult of access is "Pierre"—a book at the antipodes from "Redburn". Far from being a boy's book, "Pierre" was prophetic of the pessimism of Hardy and the subtlety of Meredith. From "Redburn" to "Pierre"; from "Typee", a spirited travel book on Polynesia, to "Clarel", an intricate philosophical poem in two volumes: these mark the antithetical extremes of the art that mated poetry and blubber, whaling and metaphysics. The very complexity and versatility of Melville's achievement has been an obstacle in the way of his just appreciation. Had Mandeville turned from his "Travels", to write "The City of Dreadful Night", the incompatibility would have been no less extraordinary or bewildering.

Indeed, Melville's complete works, in their final analysis, are a long effort toward the creation of one of the most complex, and massive, and original

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

characters in literature: the character known in life as Herman Melville. "I am like one of those seeds taken out of the Egyptian Pyramids," he wrote to Hawthorne while he was in the middle of "Moby Dick", "which, after being three thousand years a seed and nothing but a seed, being planted in English soil, it developed itself, grew to greenness, and then fell to mould. So I. Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. But I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mould." And as Melville grew in disillusionment, he grew in astonishment. In his relentless pessimism he boasted himself "in the happy condition of judicious, unencumbered travellers in Europe; they cross the frontiers into Eternity with nothing but a carpet bag,—that is to say, the Ego."

Though he boasted that he crossed the frontier into Eternity with nothing but a carpet bag, he had, in fact, sent more bulky consignments on ahead. And at the final crack of doom, this dead and disappointed mariner may yet rise to an unexpected rejoicing. For at that time of ultimate reckoning, according to the eschatology of Mr. Masefield:

> Then the great white whale, old *Moby Dick*, the king of all the whales, will rise up from his quiet in the sea, and go bellowing to his mates. And all the whales in the world—the sperm-whales, the razor-back, the black-fish, the rorque, the right, the forty-barrel Jonah, the narwhal, the hump-back, the grampus and the thrasher—will come to him, "fin-out", blowing their spray to the heavens. Then *Moby Dick* will call the roll of them, and from all the parts of the sea, from the north, from the south, from Callao to Rio, not one whale will be missing. Then *Moby Dick* will trumpet, like a man blowing a horn, and all that company of whales will "sound" (that is, dive), for it is they that have the job of raising the wrecks from down below.
>
> Then when they come up the sun will just be setting in the sea, far away to the west, like a ball of red fire. And just as the curve of it goes below the sea, it will stop sinking and lie there like a door. And the stars and the earth and the wind will stop. And there will be nothing but the sea, and this red arch of the sun, and the whales with the wrecks, and a stream of light upon the water. Each whale will have raised a wreck from among the coral, and the sea will be thick with them— row-ships and sail-ships, and great big seventy-fours, and big White Star boats, and battle-ships, all of them green with the ooze, but all of them manned by singing sailors. And ahead of them will go *Moby Dick*, towing the ship our Lord was in, with all the sweet apostles aboard of her. And *Moby Dick* will give a great bellow, like a fog-horn blowing, and stretch "fin-out" for the sun away in the west. And all the whales will bellow out an answer. And all the drowned sailors will sing their chanties, and beat the bells into a music. And the whole fleet of them will start towing at full speed towards the sun, at the edge of the sky and water. I tell you they will make white water, those ships and fishes.
>
> When they have got to where the sun is, the red ball will swing open like a door, and *Moby Dick*, and all the whales, and all the ships will rush through it into an anchorage in Kingdom Come. It will be a great calm piece of water, with land close aboard, where all the ships of the world will lie at anchor, tier upon tier, with the hands gathered forward, singing. They'll have no watches to stand, no ropes to coil, no mates to knock their heads in. Nothing will be to do except singing and beating on the bell. And all the poor sailors who went in patched rags, my son, they'll be all fine in white and gold. And ashore, among the palm-trees, there'll be fine inns for the seamen.

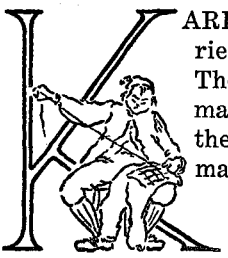
And there, among a numerous company, will be Fayaway, and Captain Ahab, and Jack Chase, and Jarl, and Toby, and Pierre, and Father Mapple, and Jackson, and Doctor Long Ghost, and Kory-Kory, and Bildad, and Peleg, and Fedallah, and Tashtego, and Marnoo, and Queequeg. But it seems hardly likely that Melville will there find Hawthorne to tempt by a basket of champagne into some little shady corner, there to cross their legs in the celestial grass that is forever tropical, and to discourse pleasantly of all the things manifold which once so much distressed them. In my Father's house are many mansions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KARI AASEN IN HEAVEN

By Johan Bojer

With Sketches by Florence Howell Barkley



ARI AASEN was married to Peter Aasen. They had together made the clearing for their little farm, and many an evening had lain down weary in their big, wide bed. Like two good plow horses they had pulled hard and easily side by side, and they could not imagine the possibility of anything happening to the one of them that did not happen to the other too. It is true that when Peter had been to the town he came home drunk and beat his wife; but the next day he was so remorseful that he beat himself.

One day Kari took to her bed, and Peter sat on a stool beside her, and asked over and over again whether she did not feel better. She kept on answering, too, that now, thank God, she felt better; but at last Peter saw that his wife was so ill that it would be better to go for the priest.

That night Kari suddenly saw that it was not Peter who sat by her bedside, but a man clothed in white garments, who had come to fetch her; and she burst into tears and pleaded: "No, no! I would rather stay with Peter!"

"What do you say?" asked her husband, who was sitting watching beside her.

But at last Kari saw the white-clad figure spread his wings, and heard him say: "Now, Kari, you must come with me." And Kari was obliged to go with him, for he took her up in his arms. They went out of the cottage and up into the air, and the Aasen buildings grew smaller and smaller; past both the sun and the stars, and much, much farther. Then Kari began once more to whimper and complain, but the stranger dried her tears and said: "Be glad of heart, for now all your troubles are at an end."

"Oh, I was so happy where I was," said Kari. "And Peter—will he be left there all alone, old and worn out as he is?"

"God will take care of him," said the stranger. "Rejoice that you will soon be in Paradise."

Kari tried to rejoice, for she had always intended to manage so that she would go to heaven when she died; but at the same time she could not help wondering whether Peter would remember to mend the sheep's tether.

At last they stopped at a great, golden gate, much larger than the gate of the magistrate's house, and passed through a garden where a number of children were playing. Among these Kari recognized a neighbor's child that had died of scarlet fever, and she said to herself: "If ever I go back to earth again, I'll tell the mother that the little one's happy where she is." But this made her remember her own little boys down on the earth, who were probably asking after their mother now.

Suddenly they turned up a moun-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tain with terraces and little white houses, exactly like something she had once seen in a picture. And if that wasn't her brother standing outside one of the houses—he who had been so poor and miserable on earth! He looked so happy now, that Kari called to him: "Good day, Ola!"

"Why, is that you, Kari?" said her brother. "This is my house," he went on, "and now I'm not bothered with either taxes or debts. I've got plenty of both food and firing, thank goodness, and I've no need to work myself to death to make both ends meet. When you've seen the Almighty, you mustn't forget to look in here."

Kari was quite touched, but once more she thought: "Poor Peter! he'll be alone on the earth, toiling and moiling as before."

At last they reached the top of the mountain, and here stood the Almighty's own house. It was much larger than the great cathedral she had seen once when she was in the town. The Almighty, in bishop's robes, was just going in, but stood still on seeing her.

Kari began to tremble, for she had heard that the Almighty was very severe, and she knew that she had many a time been different from what she should have been: so she stood still with downcast eyes and folded hands.

"Ah, good day, Kari!" She heard to her astonishment that it was the Almighty himself who was speaking so gently to her. "Welcome to heaven! Come and shake hands with me as our custom is."

Kari went timidly up to him, and falling on her knees, began to cry, for she thought this was so much too good for a poor sinner like herself.

"Rise, my child!" said the Almighty, and he dried her tears and told her that she must be happy now, for all her sorrows would be turned into joy and happiness here in heaven.

At this Kari found courage to say: "You mustn't for all the world think that I've had a hard time before either. It's only bad people who say that Peter beat me, and I can't recollect that he ever took so much as a drop of spirits when he was in town. He was so good and kind to me, and we lived so happily together, that I don't remember that there was ever so much as a bad word between us."

"It's quite right and proper for you to speak so well of your husband," said the Almighty. "But now you must go with the angel there, and look about you in Paradise, and then decide what you want to do, and what you want to be here; for it is the custom here for everyone to be what he or she likes best."

"Oh," thought Kari, "it can't be very much that I'm good for"; but the angel who had fetched her now took her with him, and they descended the mountain, but on the other side. They crossed little lakes that shone rosy in the light of heaven, and on which swam flocks of white swans, singing more beautifully than she had ever heard anything sing before. The angel told her that these swans had also been people on earth, and that they had all had a talent for singing, but no money to pay for their training; so the Almighty had made them into swans, that they might be able to sing as beautifully as they liked. Along the banks Kari saw a great many water-lilies rocking on the waves, with their open chalices turned toward the sky. The angel told her that these had been especially women who had been poetically inclined, but had never become what they meant to be on earth, and so the Almighty had blessed them in this way. The butter-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"They began to work, as they had done when they were newly married"

flies that fluttered about them were the Almighty's thoughts that now and then lighted and rested for a time on their petals.

The angel then asked Kari whether she would like to be either a swan or a water-lily.

"Gracious, no!" she said, for she was thinking once more of Peter; and supposing he came here some day, it was not at all certain he would know her again if she were a water-lily.

The angel showed her other lakes on which white and red boats were sailing about with gaily dressed people on board playing on musical instruments. And she saw a large garden in which young men and women were dancing and gazing at one another with enamored glances. They were couples who had been separated on earth, and who came together here; and the girls who had been plain and deformed on earth were the most beautiful of all here, so that they never sat out a single dance.

The angel asked Kari whether she would like to pass her time on board one of the boats, or become young and beautiful among those who danced. But Kari did not wish for either. And now too she remembered that the hay-harvest would be going on down at Aasen, and how would Peter ever be able to get in the hay all alone!

Then Kari saw a great festival, where people sat eating and drinking at a richly spread table. Most of them had roses in their hair and were dressed in silk and velvet, and they leaned over to one another, and drank toasts, and laughed so that they could be heard a long way off. The angel said that many of them had been poor on earth, and that a feast such as this had been their greatest wish, and so they were now having what they wanted. Then Kari saw another gar-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

den, in which slender women were walking with knights in narrow, grassy paths, each couple hidden from the others by trees and bushes, and it was thus they would have it. They whispered together of love, and embraced each other with sighs and kisses and oaths of fidelity; and they were so happy that they forgot everything else in Paradise. The angel asked whether Kari would decide upon a life like this, but Kari answered: "Gracious, no! I'm too old for such nonsense now!" She thought of saying that if she should choose an occupation, she would take a few pounds of wool and set to work to spin; but she was afraid that would not be fine enough for heaven.

The angel showed Kari a large gathering of men and women who were discussing complicated questions, adopting resolutions, and voting one another to the position of chairman; and he said that this was what these people had most desired on earth, and so they were allowed to amuse themselves in this way through all eternity. They looked exceedingly happy too, for their faces shone like little suns.

Kari shook her head, however, saying that this was a thing she had never understood.

Finally the angel showed her a garden in which a number of women were occupied in looking after little children. The angel said that some of these women had lost their children in life, but had found them again here, while others had longed for a child in life, but had never had one, generally because they had not married; but here they had the children of which they had dreamed, and nursed them, and put them to sleep, and washed and dressed them, and had never dreamed there could be such happiness even in heaven.

Kari thought, however, that when her own little boys were motherless on earth, she could not bring herself to take charge of other people's children here.

When at last the angel brought her back to the Almighty, he was obliged to say that Kari could not make up her mind to anything.

"What!" exclaimed the Almighty. "Is there nothing in the whole kingdom of heaven that you think good enough?"

Kari fell upon her knees and burst into tears. "Oh, it's not that, for everything is too good for me; but—but—" and she could get no further.

"Don't be afraid to say what you want, for here everyone receives what he or she most desires."

These words encouraged Kari, and she said: "If that is the case, then I should like most of all to go back to earth again; for I can't see how Peter's going to manage alone."

All the angels standing round looked in alarm at the Almighty, for they had never yet heard of anyone wishing to give up Paradise in order to return to earth. But the Almighty only smiled, and said: "Would you like me to have your husband brought here at once?"

"My very humble thanks," said Kari, "but then Christian and Simon would be left without both father and mother."

"Yes, I've still got something for your boys to do on earth," said the Almighty. "But what is it you want, then?"

"Couldn't I go back to Aasen?" asked Kari timidly.

"I suppose I must let you then," said the Almighty. "But your body's already buried, so you'll always be invisible; and there's not much that you'll be able to do either."

"I could go with Peter wherever he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

goes, and with the boys where they go," said Kari. "If I could do that I should be just as happy as the angels here in Paradise."

"Well, I suppose I must let you then," said the Almighty good-naturedly. And he patted her on the head, and told the angel to take her back to earth again.

When they had gone so far down through the clouds that she could see Aasen, Kari was quite beside herself with joy. She recognized the cottage and the cowshed and the fence a long way off. Smoke was rising from the chimney, so they must have been cooking. The angel now took leave of her, as she could easily find her way alone.

When Kari came nearer, she saw that it was early morning, for the meadows were covered with dew, and people were trooping across the fields with scythe and rake on their shoulders. Peter came out of the cowshed, leading the red-flanked cow which he was going to tether, and then he carried in the milk. Poor fellow, he'd done the milking himself today, and that was work he was not much accustomed to.

Kari perceived that he neither saw nor heard her, but she followed him into the kitchen, seated herself on the hearthstone, and watched him strain the milk. It was done carelessly, and not as it should have been done. The strainer, she saw, had not been washed, he spilled much of the milk on the floor when he emptied the pail, and the milk pan was not clean either. Didn't he know, the idiot, that in that way his milk would soon go sour?

She then followed him into the bedroom when he went to wake the boys and help them with their clothes. Simon, the younger, asked whether mother had come home, and his father told him he must leave off forever asking questions—mother would come as soon as she could. Kari patted both Simon and Christian on the cheek, but neither of them seemed to notice it, though Christian looked several times straight toward where she stood.

"Poor fellow, he'd done the milking himself"

From that time, an entirely new life began for Kari at Aasen. When the boys went to the forest to fetch wood, she went with them to guard them from evil. When Peter was taking in the hay on hot days, she followed him and tried to make his burden lighter. At night she remained beside his bed and the boys', to see that they had no bad dreams. When Peter rose on Sunday mornings, she tried to steal into his thoughts and make him decide to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

go to church. She went into the cowshed once every day to protect the cows from disease; and in the autumn, when frosty nights came, she went about the fields and persuaded the frost not to touch Peter's corn.

Toward the end of the winter, Peter made up his mind to take a trip into the town, and now Kari did not know what to do. Should she go with him, or should she stay at home with the boys? It ended with her staying at home, and while the boys tried to cook their own food and to see to the cows in the cowshed, she went about with them trying to show them how to do it.

When Peter came home he was drunk, and beat the boys just as he had so often beaten her; but the next day he was remorseful as he had always been, and because, thank goodness, his conscience was not ruined yet.

One day a strange woman came to the house with a bundle under her arm, made herself at home, and took over the work in the kitchen and the cowshed. A little while after, Kari saw that Peter was thinking of getting married again. "Poor old fellow!" she thought. "Is he really going to throw himself away on another woman?" She had to look on while her dresses and linen were used by the stranger. Later in the spring, preparations for the wedding were made, and one day the neighbors appeared with baskets on their arms, and drank to the happy couple.

The boys went about looking bashfully at one another, for they were thinking of their mother. Kari went with the little wedding-party to the church, and sat far back in the choir, and watched Peter being wedded to another woman.

"It's too bad!" thought Kari. "She hasn't even tied his silk neckerchief properly round his neck. It usen't to be like that when I did it." The boys sat down in the nave, and looked on at the ceremony with wide-eyed wonder, and Kari hastened down to them and sat between them.

"I shan't be wanted at Aasen now," she thought; "and perhaps the Almighty would still take me back to heaven." But it might be that she would be more necessary to Peter than ever, and so it ended in her going back to Aasen with the party, and remaining there as before.

Things were very different for Peter now. He and his new wife frequently fought, and the boys were so ill-treated by their stepmother that they often cried themselves to sleep.

The Almighty had seen all this, however, and one day an angel came flying down to Kari, and asked her if she would go with him to Paradise.

"Oh no!" said Kari. "I don't think I should have a day's happiness there either, so long as things go with Peter as they're going now." So she stayed on, and was comforted in knowing that Peter thought of her more and more, and talked about her to the boys when the woman was not present.

Years passed, and the boys grew up and took places in the parish. They got on, and one of them married a farmer's daughter, who inherited both farm and land, and the other took a girl with money, and bought a boat and nets, and began fishing on a large scale.

A day came when Peter lay ill in the bed in which Kari had closed her eyes, and she sat on the edge of the bed, and passed her hand over his eyes in the hope that he would see her. At last he looked up and gazed at her. "Oh, is that you, Kari?" he said. "Yes, thank God, it's me," said Kari.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"And I think we shall soon live together again." "I expect you're pretty angry with me because I took another woman into the house," said Peter sadly. "May the Almighty be as sure to forgive you as I am," said Kari, as she wiped his brow.

"He doesn't know what he's saying," said the woman, who was fidgeting about the room. "I'd better send for the priest."

At last Peter was free to go with Kari, and outside the door stood an angel, waiting to take them both to Paradise.

When they were brought before the Almighty, they held one another by the hand as they had done the day they stood before the altar to be wedded. As before, the Almighty bade them welcome, and told them to look about and decide what they would like to be.

An angel took them about and showed them all the splendors that were to be seen; and when at last they went back, the Almighty said: "Well, Peter Aasen, what have you decided upon for yourself and your wife?"

Peter, who now knew that he might be exactly what he most wished to be, answered a little hesitatingly: "If you had a little piece of land that we could begin on, as we did when we were newly married, it would be more than we have deserved."

At this the Almighty laughed, and said to an angel: "Go with them to the great clearing, give them tools and timber for a cottage, and as much land as they want." And the angel took them to quite another part of Paradise, where Peter saw the finest land he had ever seen; and here the angel asked how much they wanted.

Kari and Peter looked at one another. "Well," said Peter, "on earth we had three cows, but now we can do with two."

The angel then gave them so much land that they would soon be able to feed two cows, and afterward, he said, they could add as much new land as they liked. At this Kari and Peter looked at one another, and thought they had never been so well off.

And then they began to work, as they had done when they were newly married. Peter dug, and Kari pulled up roots and made the ground even with the fork; and now and again they straightened their backs, wiped the perspiration from their brows, looked at one another, and laughed. As when they had first married, Peter was so industrious that he would not even have an afternoon nap; but Kari, as in their young days, would go out to him in the field, with his afternoon coffee in a little tin can. When they began to build the cottage, they decided that it should be exactly like the one at Aasen; that would be so nice when their sons came. And when at last they had a roof over their heads, and lay once more in their comfortable wide bed, they both agreed that no one in all Paradise could be so happy as they two.

Copyright, 1921, by Moffat, Yard and Company.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PLACES

By Sara Teasdale

I

TWILIGHT

Tucson

ALOOF as aged kings,
Wearing like them the purple,
The mountains ring the mesa
Crowned with a dusky light;
Many a time I watched
That coming on of darkness
Till stars burned through the heavens
Intolerably bright.

It was not long I lived there,
But I became a woman
Under those vehement stars,
For it was there I heard
For the first time my spirit
Forging an iron rule for me,
As though with slow cold hammers
Beating out word by word:

"Take love when love is given,
But never think to find it
A sure escape from sorrow
Or a complete repose;
Only yourself can heal you,
Only yourself can lead you
Up the hard road to heaven
That ends where no one knows."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

FULL MOON

Santa Barbara

I LISTENED, there was not a sound to hear
In the great rain of moonlight pouring down,
The eucalyptus trees were carved in silver,
And a light mist of silver lulled the town.

I saw far off the grey Pacific bearing
A broad white disk of flame,
And on the garden-walk a snail beside me
Tracing in crystal the slow way he came.

III

WINTER SUN

Lenox

THERE was a bush with scarlet berries,
And there were hemlocks heaped with snow,
With a sound like surf on long sea-beaches
They took the wind and let it go.

The hills were shining in their samite,
Fold after fold they flowed away;
"Let come what may," your eyes were saying,
"At least we two have had today."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

III: OWEN JOHNSON

With a Sketch by William Gropper

IT is Owen Johnson's triumph that every boy who has gone to college since he wrote his young-lad books, looks upon him as the dean of the authors of that type of fiction. It is his tragedy that, after a round dozen or more of years wherein he has compressed much literary work, he is still referred to as "the author of the Lawrenceville stories". All his later books are passed over, with the exception of "The Salamander", and one goes inevitably back to that first thrilling success, that time when he depicted the boy mind, the boy heart, as few writers since Mark Twain have done it. "The Tennessee Shad" and "Stover at Yale" are also always spoken of, in any summing up of his achievement, as well as that fine little golf story in one of his earlier collections—I think it's called "Par 3". Yet since those days of glory, those days of vigorous production—he was hailed as a boy wonder when he brought out "Arrows of the Almighty"—he has written "The Woman Gives", "Making Money", and now "The Wasted Generation".

He is but forty-two years of age—at that period of his life when he should be on the forward march. One thinks of his "Stover at Yale", with its truth and humor, and sighs over the stuff that followed it—with the exception of one. It is true that many of the most astute reviewers have found much to praise in his latest volume; and it is significant that they are of the older school, who first acclaimed him loudly. They speak of it as a fine interpretation of certain phases of the World War.

One remembers Johnson's golden opportunities. No young man ever started out so propitiously. A good fairy must have watched over his cradle. His father was a distinguished literary figure of what might be called the mid-Victorian era of American letters, and has since become our Ambassador to Italy. His mother is a splendid, cultured woman. Young Johnson had chances hurled at his door, and with the common sense of the astute youth he was, as well as with no small equipment of talent, he seized them as they came his way—made the most, for a time, of his growing popularity, certainly coined money, married and reared a family, was a good fellow at The Players and other clubs—in short, became highly considered in the tumult and passion of New York life.

During the war he produced little. One slender volume about France came from his hitherto prolific pen—that was about all. Hearst had gobbled him up, had seen the great possibilities in him; and it was rumored that he had signed a five years' contract for all his literary output, at a fabulous salary. He was to be free and untrammeled; there were to be no demands whatever made upon him for "sex stuff"; he would simply sit comfortably at home, a pad upon his knee, and let the words flow, or not, as it suited his whim.

But Johnson is, when all is said and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Owen Johnson

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

done, an artist of no mean parts. And artists cannot be tied down to contracts, cannot have life run for them on too smooth wheels. There must be conflict, always, a bit of worry, if the true man of letters is to accomplish what he was ordained to accomplish. One novel a year—or less—would mean only a few hours' work a day; then golf in the afternoon, a bit of reading, and a dinner party, followed by a theatre or the opera. An ideal life for an American gentleman of letters, still in his robust thirties! It sounded glorious—and it *was* glorious, for a time. But not glorious for Johnson's art. He did not care to keep the contract, and it was broken, I believe, by mutual consent.

At any rate, his next serial appeared in his first love, "McClure's". They ran "The Wasted Generation", spoken of above, only this year.

Johnson has changed publishers, as he has changed editors, several times. He has had Bobbs-Merrill, Stokes, and now Little, Brown and Company; and I think one or two others, maybe Macmillan in those distant days when he was writing boy stories. In between he made a dramatization of "The Salamander", and Carroll McComas, if I remember correctly, played the part of the girl who kept herself from being scorched. It ran about two weeks on Broadway; but people had not forgotten his splendid adaptation of "The Return from Jerusalem" for the wonderful Madame Simone, and an original play for Nazimova called "The Comet", which ran for two years in and out of New York; and Arnold Daly in Johnson's delicate one-act bit, "A Comedy for Wives".

It has been said of Johnson that no one loves a harmless practical joke more than he. There are lots of his friends who know that he will never give his correct name when he calls them on the telephone: it is always the Federal Income Tax Collector, or some such dreadful ogre; and he loves to leave strange cards at editorial offices and then run away like a schoolboy. It is this spirit in him, perhaps, which has caused his stories of youngsters to be so popular. You see, he is still a boy at heart; he will never grow up, never be spoiled by success—and he has had his goodly share of it. Socially, too, he is popular, much in demand, though he is strong in his likes and dislikes, and never wastes much time on people he does not care for. He can order a good dinner; and how he does love the gastronomical side of life! He is extravagant, sometimes to the point of foolishness. It's always a taxi or a hansom for him, when he isn't riding in his own limousine; but, unlike many writers, he does not bore even his best friends, when he dines with them, with long monologues concerning what he is doing or is about to do. Indeed, he is very modest about his work. He has often said that a man's books should speak for him; that all one has to say should be embodied in one's fiction. He certainly practises what he preaches. He is, in many ways, the most unliterary literary man I ever knew. But he does love the great books of all time, and he has read deeply, drunk deeply at those fountainheads of prose which have been his inspiration. He prefers the French writers to the English; and though his father is a poet of some distinction, the son has not inherited his taste for verse. Yet in his prose one will often encounter the singing phrase that proclaims a poetic inheritance.

He has had many charming and stirring friendships. He admired

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Theodore Roosevelt, and often made pilgrimages to Oyster Bay to lunch with the former President. During the war he was bitterly anti-German, and used whatever influence he had to spread the gospel of France. As a child, he had been to school in the country of Balzac; and after he had published "The Spirit of France" the French government decorated him with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor. He is genuinely and openly proud of that decoration, and always wears it.

If he is not a profound philosopher, he has a penetrating, incisive mind, though sometimes he appraises people unjustly, and is intolerant of their human shortcomings. What he needs is discipline. His novels always, to me, run to verbosity. Yet he has never, since the days of "The Varmint", joined that group of overwriters who grind out columns for the turnover of magazines at so much per word. The legend is that Johnson was piqued when his one and only serial in a certain publication brought him so much fame but very little money; for in those days he was not highly paid. But to jump in a few years out of the $3,000 class into the $25,000 class, is an achievement of which any young author might well be proud.

Johnson once got mixed up in politics. He wanted to see General Leonard Wood made President, and he worked hard and unselfishly and untiringly to that end. He was honest, too, in his purpose. He had no ax to grind; though there were unkind lookers-on who said that he had his eye on an ambassadorship. Nothing, I think, was further from his thoughts; for he knew how much wealth an ambassador needs these days. He was content to see his father appointed by Wilson. As a matter of fact, young Johnson would make an almost ideal envoy at any foreign court; for he is thoroughly cosmopolitan, speaks French and Italian fluently, and has the necessary savoir-faire to make him a credit to the United States. When he is fifty who knows but that he may go abroad in some such capacity? But now, he seems to be quite content in his native land, with his wife and family about him. His political adventurings were short-lived. With his colorful and honest temperament, he could not cope with hard-boiled senators and charlatans in the ring at Washington, and he came back greatly disillusioned, and bravely said so. Enough of that sort of thing for him! Never again! A little of it went a long way. But he should have written some political stories—they might have been good stuff.

Johnson, above all things, is charming. A man is known by the company he keeps. Perhaps, then, it would be illuminating to give a list of those men with whom the novelist has always been more or less intimate. For years he was adored by, and adored in turn, Arthur Bartlett Maurice; and it was while the latter was editing THE BOOKMAN that young Johnson's series of questions for college students, which had formed a passage in "Stover at Yale", was reprinted by Maurice—a literary interrogation list that stumped us all, and was exceedingly clever. He probably set the fashion for Edison and others; for he *is* a bit of a pioneer. Witness "The Salamander". It came five years before its time; now we realize its bitter truth. There is no doubt that his questions set the literati talking—and squirming; and it was all great fun. It may have been that Owen was at his old business of playing a practical joke. Nevertheless, the thing he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

did created a storm, a veritable upheaval. Not in years had ignorance been more plainly shown up; and many a college man hung his head and ran to cover, with a pathetic percentage of twelve or so in his favor.

Maurice and Johnson are as thick as ever; but the author of the Lawrenceville stories has kept other friends over a long period of years; and he has been catholic in his tastes. His last book is dedicated to Hugh Walpole, though one imagines that this is a more or less recent spiritual tie. He likes Frank Crowninshield very much indeed; but his great David and Jonathan attachment was with the late Walter Hale. That was a fine, solid, enduring friendship; and Johnson felt the artist's death keenly. Christian Brinton, the art critic, has always been close to him, the recipient of many confidences; and so have Gari Melchers, Austin Strong, Charles Hanson Towne, Harry Lindeberg, the architect, who was his best man at his last wedding. Then there are several actors and painters and singers of note with whom he has been on intimate terms. He is very fond of all interpreters of the arts, and when he gives a reception or a dinner he never makes a mistake. He likes things to be right—he is almost Teutonic in his passion for precedents and form. He never takes chances, socially.

What does he look like? James Montgomery Flagg has made a splendid, slashing drawing of him, though Johnson now has even less hair than when that likeness was made. He has a rather florid complexion, dreamy eyes, and lips that curl and reveal a certain worldliness. Yet there is a fine spiritual side to Owen Johnson. He loves the stillness of the country, though he is also city mad. He exudes physical health, and though it would be better for him if he took off ten or fifteen pounds, he cannot be called too stout. There is a roguish look about him, a daredevil gleam in his eye when he is not working too hard. No one enjoys a banquet more than he. Then all his inhibitions vanish, all his dignity goes —particularly when it is a stag affair —and he becomes almost the court jester, as fond as Charles Lamb of atrocious puns, and is the ribald, flaming, delightful companion that he loves to be and knows so well how to be. For he can talk brilliantly, insert the almost Oliver Herfordlike bon mot into his conversation, make memorable phrases—when he is in the mood.

Like most professional writers, Johnson is delightful and tractable—unless his copy is tampered with. There is that memorable episode of his run in with "Everybody's Magazine" when that periodical was publishing his novel "Making Money". It seems that the serialization of it began long before the manuscript was completed; and the final instalment reached the office at the very last moment. It was felt that certain knots in the plot had not been untied. But Johnson had sailed for Europe. One of the assistant editors volunteered, in the emergency, to wind things up satisfactorily.

When Johnson returned from his trip abroad he read a curious distortion of his last chapter. He could not believe his eyes. It was as though someone had taken his child and amputated one of its arms, a toe or two, and chipped a bit off the left ear. He was a distracted parent. A totally changed brain-child stood before him. He was furious; and it is said that he threatened all sorts of damages unless his own version was printed in the next number, so that he could be artistically justified.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The editors, of course, consented. The files of "Everybody's" offer interesting proof of one of the most amazing contretemps between editor and author in the history of magazine making. There is no doubt that Johnson won out; he has many letters from admiring readers to prove that his own version was the better of the two.

Owen Johnson may still write a novel that will atone for many old transgressions. He is capable of big ideas, and of putting those ideas upon paper. He is still very definitely in the literary ring, and he has a tremendous following. One of these days —let us hope it will be with his next book—he may beautifully record some of the captured magic from Olympus.

TWO WAYS

By John V. A. Weaver

ONCET in the Museum
We seen a little rose
In a jar of alcohol—
You turns up your nose:
"That's the way people think
Love ought to be—
Last forever! Pickled roses!
None o' that for me!"

That night was fireworks
Out to Riverview—
Gold and red and purple
Bustin' over you.
"Beautiful!" you says then,
"That's how love should be!
Burn wild and die quick—
That's the love for me!"

Now you're gone for good...say,
Wasn't they no other way?...

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDGE OF COBBLER'S WOOD

By John Farrar

With Sketches by Gordon Ross

COBBLER'S WOOD lay across the buttercup meadow. From Anne's house its great pines and smaller oaks seemed very dark against the afternoon sun. Anne had always known that it was a magic wood, that down among the soft pine needles and under the green bushes elves played games so delightful that no child could imagine them. She had always known, too, that when she was old enough to go across the buttercup meadow to Cobbler's Wood alone, she would find something magical: a fairy ring in the yellow-green grass by the clear spring, a humming-bird carrying an elfin rider into the shadows, or a slender green nymph bathing in the black pool that was at the centre of the wood.

This afternoon Billy Allen had been playing with her. They had been digging a hole to see if they could reach China on the other side of the world; but Billy had grown tired of digging, and had run away to play baseball with the boys. Anne liked baseball, too; but not on a day like this, when she knew that magical adventures were waiting her. She would be braver than any boy. She would dare the silences and the mysteries of Cobbler's Wood.

She looked back at the windows of the house to see if anyone was watching. Then she ran swiftly into the meadow, snatching at the yellow petals of the buttercups as she passed. Soon the pine trees seemed to lift their heads far far above her, and she found herself in the great stillness at the edge of the wood. She was a little frightened, but the gay waving of the buttercups comforted her. One of her feet hurt. There was a round pebble in her shoe. She could feel it pressing against her heel. She sat down on the green carpet of moss to take off the shoe. Then she heard someone singing. It was a tiny voice, but sweet to hear. The sound of it singing came from behind Anne. For a while she listened, not quite daring to turn about to discover who the singer was.

If I were a little human child,
Instead of a silly elf,
I'd never dance upon the flowers,
Nor stay all by myself.

If I were a little human child,
I'd learn to eat and play,
Instead of chasing stars by night
And butterflies by day.

Slowly Anne turned about. Then she saw, sitting on the brown old stump of a tree, a funny little boy—or was it a boy?

His bare legs and arms were as brown as an Indian's, and he wore a bright red feather in his hair. His lips were smiling; but there was one strange thing about him. That was his nose. It was long and pointed and curled at the tip. Surely this was not a boy's nose. Anne jumped up and stood looking at him.

"Stop staring at my nose," he said

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suddenly. "It's not a polite thing to do."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Anne. "But would you consider it most impolite if I should ask you what you are?"

"Certainly. Very impolite to ask me what I am; though I don't at all mind informing you as to who I am. Will that serve?"

"Oh yes! Quite as well," Anne hastened to assure him humbly.

"Well," and the little fellow's nose twisted to one side. "I am the Mikumwess."

"But"—Anne started to speak.

"Don't interrupt me," he scolded. "A Mikumwess is an Indian elf. You know this hasn't always been Cobbler's Wood. It was once an Indian hunting ground, and now it is the great medicine wood of the Indian fairies."

"Stop staring at my nose," he said.

"Oh!" exclaimed Anne, for she did not at all understand what he meant.

"Medicine," went on the Mikumwess, "is Indian for magic, you see. Now I am the guardian of the edge of the wood." He stuck out his chest quite proudly. "I keep little girls like yourself from finding all the marvelous things that lie in the centre of the wood, deep down in the black pool."

"Oh!" exclaimed Anne, and the tone

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of her voice when she said it showed that she was very unhappy because she must be kept from seeing the wonders of the Indian medicine wood.

The Mikumwess looked at her solemnly, then he hopped down from the stump. He came over toward her and held up his finger, just as a preacher sometimes does when he is telling you to be good.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Anne," she told him, but he was so serious that her voice trembled as she spoke.

"Anne," he went on, and he seemed to grow even more solemn. "Do you like poetry?"

"Oh I do, I do," and she clapped her hands. "I like poetry, and especially *your* poetry."

This seemed to please the little Mikumwess mightily. He jumped and ran. He threw his hands over his head in glee. Truly Anne could not have spoken more wisely, for it is well known in the shadows of Cobbler's Wood that the Mikumwess is too fond of making verses. Just as some people like jam on buttered toast, and others eat too much ice cream, so the Mikumwess had a bad habit of making verses and of saying them to people, often when they did not want at all to hear them.

"Listen to this one," said he and he took both of Anne's hands in his and danced her about as he sang:

I'd rather be a cricket or a mouse or a wren,
Or a woodchuck or a tree,
I'd rather be a cow or a sheep or a hen
Than a foolish chickadee,
Than a chick-a-dee-dee-dee.

"But I like chickadees," said Anne. "They are cunning little birds, and always so happy."

The Mikumwess laughed.

"So do I," he whispered. "That's the nicest thing about poetry. You can say just what you don't think."

"Now!" said he, with a shake of his nose. "Now—I'm going to take you with me."

"With you?" Anne had never felt so happy in her life. "Are you going to take me with you to the black pool in Cobbler's Wood?"

"Yes," said the Mikumwess, and he took her hand firmly in his. She liked him very much. He was so gay and, if it were not for that funny nose, so nice to look at.

How they whisked through the forest! It was almost like flying. The bushes seemed to open their branches to let them pass. Anne had never seen the woods so beautiful. The pine trees seemed larger than ever before, and as she looked up, their round trunks almost reached to the sky. Presently they were at the edge of the black pool. It was no longer just a small circle of water under the pine trees. It was a great lake, stretching out and out, still and smooth and dark, with far far on the other side, the faint black line of trees showing like black lace against the sunset. Anne was frightened.

"It's very late," she told the Mikumwess. He seemed not to hear her; but stood looking out over the water.

"It's very late," she repeated. "I shall miss my tea."

"Nonsense," said he. "You'll do nothing of the sort. Listen to this one:

Some children may take crumpets
Or cookies with their tea,
While some may favor muffins,
They're not the food for me.

If you should give me caramels,
I'd beg from you instead
The only food for teatime,
Just jam on buttered bread!

"I like toasted crumpets *very* much," Anne told him. She did not wish to hurt his feelings; but it seemed to her foolish always to be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

saying such absurd things, even though the Mikumwess called it poetry.

"Now," he said, not paying any attention at all to what she had said about the crumpets, "we are going out to that island."

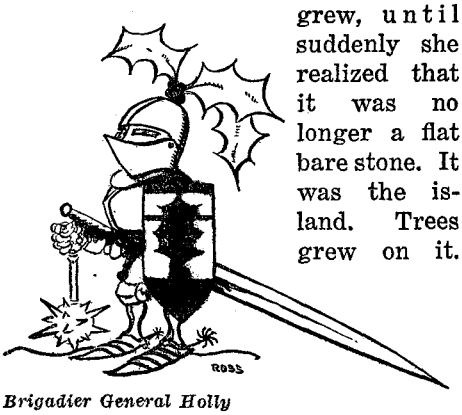
"What island?" asked Anne, for in all the length and breadth of the black water that lay before them there was not even the tiniest of islands.

"Of course you don't see it, my dear, because it isn't there yet. However, presently, my dear, presently."

He leaned down now, and picked up a flat red stone from the edge of the lake. He took it in his hand carefully, drew back his arm, and threw it out over the water.

"Count the skips!" he commanded. The stone hit the black water and bounced off; again it hit, again and again. Then it stopped.

"Twenty-six!" shouted Anne, and she clapped her hands. Even Billy Allen, who was very clever and oh, so strong! could only skip a stone seven times. Then the strangest thing happened. The flat red stone did not sink. It remained floating on the water. At first Anne could scarcely see it; but soon she realized that it was growing. Larger and larger it grew, until suddenly she realized that it was no longer a flat bare stone. It was the island. Trees grew on it.



Brigadier General Holly

Robber-Baron Goldenrod

Great pines towering high, beautiful curving willows on the shore. In the centre of the island there was something huge and snow-white that looked like a mountain. It was indeed a beautiful island. Anne looked at it wonderingly.

"Come," said the Mikumwess, taking her hand, "it is very late. The Micabo will be growing impatient. It is long past my hour."

"But there is no bridge," said Anne, as the Mikumwess seemed just about to drag her into the cold water.

"How careless of me, my dear Anne," he apologized. "Of course not; not yet, at any rate"; and he leaned down to pick up a long, long pine needle. Swish! and he threw it into the water.

It grew wide and it grew long, until finally it lay, a shining yellow bridge, leading straight out to the island. Anne and the Mikumwess stepped out upon it, and the sound of their walking was just as loud as if the bridge had really been a bridge and not just a pine needle from the ground of Cobbler's Wood.

As they approached the shore of the island Anne saw something waving and gleaming. Could it be a sword? There seemed also to be a crowd of people rushing to and fro.

"What's the matter?" she asked the Mikumwess, who was staring at the crowd with a puzzled look in his eyes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The matter is, my dear, that *I* don't know what is the matter."

So they hurried forward. As they stepped upon the land there hurried toward them a little old man with an extremely red nose and bushy white whiskers. He wore a suit of armor and a helmet which sat crookedly on his head. It was easy enough to see why this was so, for he kept waving a long sword over his head. The blade of the sword was very broad, and the hilt of the sword very long. It was, in fact, much too large for the little old man, and every time he waved it, he hit his own helmet. On his other arm was a heavy shield.

"You must go back!" he shouted at them, breathlessly. "There is danger here. Back! Back!"

"Don't be absurd!" said the Mikumwess; for that impolite expression seemed to please him vastly. "We cannot go back. There is no bridge."

Anne looked about, and saw that he was quite right. The pine needle bridge had completely disappeared.

"Of course you know who I am," said the little old man.

Anne admired the Mikumwess very much, for he did not hesitate an instant. Doubtless their heads would have been chopped off had he not known the name of the important gentleman.

"Yes, of course," the Mikumwess replied. "You are Brigadier General Holly, of the Army of Fall and Winter Flowers."

"Quite right, quite right," mumbled the general. He actually seemed very pleased that the Mikumwess had known his name. Though, after all, he *was* wearing a sprig of holly in his helmet.

"What shall we do with the two of you?" he went on. "A great war is in progress. Those silly Summer Flowers are fighting. Do you know why they are fighting? It's because they want to bloom all winter—and we can't have that. That would be too terrible. So we must fight them. What a foolish time for you to visit the island, and who is this *person* with you?"

"This is Anne," explained the Mikumwess.

General Holly was silent. He looked at Anne as though he did not like her and even as though he thought she was an enemy. As they stood there a tall slender young lady ran toward them, weeping. She threw her arms about General Holly's neck.

"Take them away!" she pleaded. "They'll be killed. Take them away!"

"Now dear Lady Mistletoe," the general spoke to her most calmly, "there is no way for them to go. Please do not cry so much. Your tears will spoil my new green cloak."

Lady Mistletoe, whose face was so pale that Anne thought she should have been in bed and under a doctor's care, did not listen to General Holly, but went on weeping. The Mikumwess took Anne's hand again and led her away toward the edge of the wood.

"Don't worry, my dear," he whispered. "They do it every year. Every year the Summer Flowers revolt and wish to keep on blooming all winter. Isn't General Holly an absurd old fellow? Do you know, he and Lady Mistletoe are quite insane. Why! They're really not flowers at all. They're just *berries!*"

Now they were coming into a grove of grey birches through which ran a tiny brook so silver in color that it was beautiful to see. Anne would have liked to stay there forever looking up through the misty green of the leaves toward the pink glow of the sunset sky.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"She stood looking up at the Micabo"

"We must hurry," said the Mikumwess. "It will be dark soon."

The birch grove now opened into a mossy space in the wood, where the brook was lost in a thick green carpet and many closed gentians bloomed. Ahead of them was a clashing and a clamor, and before they had time to run, a battle was in progress before their eyes. Anne was frightened, but the Mikumwess drew her back of a tree trunk.

"It's nothing," he whispered. "They make a great deal of noise and fight all the time, but nobody is ever hurt. Splendid fun, really. Watch them."

Anne had never seen so many bright colors. There was the deep purple of the asters and the bright scarlet of the salvia, the delicate pink of the wild rose and the yellow and orange of the wild lilies. Backward and forward they moved, these little people with their splendid cloaks. The Mikumwess became very excited.

"See!" He pointed with his finger to a wiry young fellow who was leaping about with a long thin golden sword in his hand. "That's Captain Aster and there, oh there! is the leader of all the Summer Flowers. Who is he, do you think?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anne looked. She saw a proud man in a bright though somewhat tattered yellow cloak. His hat was green and from the side of it waved a crest of yellow plumes.

"It's goldenrod!" she shouted.

"Yes, so it is. Aren't you clever, my dear. It's Robber-Baron Goldenrod, and wouldn't you be happy to have shoes like his!"

Anne did admire the boots. They looked like those which courtiers wear in the pictures, only Goldenrod's were bright orange with green buckles.

The Mikumwess was growing careless about keeping out of sight of the warriors. He was becoming so interested in the battle that he let go of Anne's hand.

"Listen to this one!" he shouted. "It's a war song."

If drums could not be beaten,
And guns could not be shot,
We could have a war with pillows
Just as well as not.

Now, when a pillow hits you,
It feels just soft and thick;
But it's lots more fun than being shot
By a bullet or a brick.

"Oh! Oh! *Dear* Mikumwess," shouted Anne, for he had become so interested in his song that he had run off and she was all alone. She was just beginning to cry when she felt someone's hands upon her shoulders. She looked about. It was General Holly.

"I knew it!" he said sternly. "You *are* Lady Sweet Pea. You are spying on us! I shall keep you prisoner. You shall never be a spy again. No, never!"

"But"—and Anne commenced to cry.

"It's no use crying, my dear; you cannot fool old General Holly. I've seen too many Christmases and too many of Mistletoe's tears and kisses to be softened by a lady's sorrows. Come! Guards, ho!"

Two little field asters hopped toward Anne and took positions one on either side of her.

"March!" commanded the general, and they went on across the mossy space and into the forest again.

"Watch out! The snap-dragons are coming!" shouted one of the Aster Guards. As quick as a wink Anne found herself free. She saw a troup of angry snap-dragons leaping after the fleeing general and his body guards, just as though they were animals instead of flowers.

She was alone. That was better than being a prisoner, but it was growing darker now in the woods. Soon it would be night time. What if the island should turn into a stone again and she should find herself in the cold black water of the pool in Cobbler's Wood! She was too frightened to cry. She tried to think what Billy Allen would do. He would be very brave. She tightened her fists and walked along quickly.

Now there seemed to be fewer trees in the woods. She hurried. Perhaps she would find the Mikumwess.

"Mikumwess! Mikumwess!" she called. How loud her voice sounded floating out among the trunks of the trees! She was so happy when she found herself in a great open space, entirely surrounded by black pine trunks that stretched up and up so that it was quite impossible to see the tops of them, or even their lowest branches. In the centre of the clearing was an Indian totem pole. It seemed made of living faces, instead of those carved from wood. At the top of the totem pole, high above her, she saw ten gleaming stars moving about in a circle, and from their points streamed fire, and it was beautiful to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

see. Now Anne no longer felt afraid. She felt calm, as she had sometimes felt before when she sat with her mother looking out at the still sky and the full moon.

Behind the totem pole was a great white tent, an Indian wigwam, she knew. Toward this she went, as though she were being drawn by some magic power.

Slowly she went in. It was such a large space that she felt just as small as a bee must feel when it becomes lost in the great cup of a white tulip. All about the edges of the hall stood Indian warriors, tall, solemn, and brown, with feathered caps upon their heads and bright colored blankets wrapped about them. Outside it had been dark, but here a great white light shone from the peak of the tent, where flashes of lightning darted about. One of the Indians was playing on a red drum, and the noise was the rumbling of summer thunder. There was a whisper from the lips of the great Indians:

"The Micabo! The Micabo!"

There now appeared in the centre of the wigwam a giant creature. The huge Indians bowed down their heads, the lightnings flashed more brightly, and Anne felt very small in the glow of their magnificence. Again there was a whisper:

"The Micabo! The Micabo!"

As soon as her eyes became accustomed to the brighter light, Anne looked up at the figure before her. It was a mighty rabbit, white and furry, just like Peter Rabbit at home who nibbled lettuce from her hand. On his head the giant white rabbit wore a head-dress of red feathers, and though he was very terrible to see his face had a kindly look. For a time all was silent in that bright place, until Anne began to wonder if it would suddenly fade away and prove itself a dream. Then, one of the giant Indians spoke, and his voice was like the sound of mountain brooks swollen with spring floods.

"Bring the flowers before the Micabo."

The curtains of the wigwam parted, and the flowers rushed in, helter skelter. So many colors filled the place that Anne felt as though she were lying in a beam of sunlight colored by a stained glass window.

There was Robber-Baron Goldenrod and Brigadier General Holly, and they were arguing, the one with the other. All through the crowding company of the flowers little quarrels were taking place. Anne shrank back against the orange blanket which wrapped the legs of one of the giant Indians.

Then a voice sounded. It was a voice sweeter than the sound of distant pine branches swayed by a soft wind. It was the voice of the Micabo, the giant hare, the great deity of the medicine forest.

"Do not quarrel," it said to the flowers. "Go back to your own places in the wood. Why should you wish to bloom for more than your appointed span? The kind Lord who lives at the end of the Rainbow has created you in beauty and in light. Bow your heads humbly before him and ask forgiveness."

Ashamed, the bright flowers knelt, and there was a deep silence. A cold wind blew for a moment. It was the breath of the Lord who lives at the end of the Rainbow.

Anne felt someone plucking at her sleeve.

"Oh Mikumwess!" she started to shout; but the little fellow, who had been hiding between the giant Indian's legs, clapped his hand over her mouth and took her hand. She did

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not want to leave that place. For a moment she stood looking up at the Micabo, but he did not see her. The Mikumwess led her firmly away. She would have liked to stay forever in that white place, so still and holy was it.

"Why did you take me away?" she asked the Mikumwess when they were outside and running through the dark wood.

"The Micabo would never let you come to the medicine wood again," he said; "and I want you to come. I like you." And he gave her hand a squeeze.

At the shore he found a pine needle. Swish! and there was another bridge. Before Anne knew it, they had dashed through Cobbler's Wood and were back at the stump.

"Well!" said the Mikumwess, and Anne thought he sighed a bit. "It's just your teatime. Run along home."

"Must I go?" asked she.

"Oh yes, of course; but you'll come again. Do you like me a little?"

"Indeed I do—if only your nose were not quite so long you'd be *much* nicer than Billy Allen."

Then the Mikumwess vanished sadly. It was a curious thing. As he melted away, it seemed to Anne that he suddenly reached up his hand to his face, and that in the place of the long crooked nose was a tiny nice boy's nose. However, she could not tell. Only this she knew, that his eyes were filled with laughter. Just before his form faded out completely, she heard him say, "Listen to this one"; and his song was floating all about her, even after she could no longer see him.

Salvia's a gay flower,
But not so gay as mine,
Roses are for duchesses,
Forty, fair, fine.

Lilies, if you wish them;
But oh, the flower for me,
Clinging, tiny, delicate
Lady Sweet Pea!
Oh yes! Oh yes! the sweetest flower
Is—Lady Sweet Pea!

"I wonder," thought Anne, as she went back through the buttercup meadow toward the lighted dining room windows of home, "did he really think I was Lady Sweet Pea?"

STORM SONG

By Karle Wilson Baker

MY bosom with the beat of wings is troubled as the day is falling;
Within my bosom hungry birds are circling on the wind and calling.

My breast is blinded by the rain and buffeted by weary flying.
My bosom with the beat of wings is troubled, and with bitter crying.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MY FABIAN SUMMER

By Mary Austin

DURING the first decade of the present century the most coveted and hazardous adventure of the English-speaking Intellectual, was being invited to address the Fabian Society. It met weekly at King's Hall, presided over by a fox-colored half-god, with a barely perceptible brogue and a habit of kicking up the cloven hoofs of his mind in a manner so engaging that you forgave him for having at the same time kicked the dust of obliquity on yours. There were, of course, speakers who declined to meet Mr. Shaw in debate on the ground that he kicked dust in proportion as he found himself unable to meet your thrust. What I suspect is that nobody knew whether G. B. S. could meet an argument or not, since by the time the argument had reached its destination, he had already moved on to his next position.

The Fabians are Socialists, but to the American whose associations with the word are all of Rand School and red neckties, it must be explained that the relation of Fabian Socialism to Marxian, is about the relation of early Christianity to Methodism. Fabianism in its best days was an incandescent state of mind in the heat of which the existing social order was expected to drop noiselessly into ash. Permeation rather than political action was its method, and the history of its interests provides the stuffing for a full-sized book. Besides Shaw it numbered H. G. Wells, and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, to mention only easily recognizable names among its members. Whoever survived a Fabian debate with enough of his original intellectual integument to cover his quivering soul, could thereafter count himself among the intellectually considerable.

About the end of the decade, Mr. Wells, whose mind began to itch for the world horizons that have since engaged his attention, thought it time for the Society to emerge from its perpetual discussion into a competent political instrument. The Webbs thought not, with the result that it was finally Wells who emerged—spent missiles of the encounter still strew the field of radical literature of that time—leaving the Fabians securely "Webbed", as he put it, in the factual entanglement of the Minority Poor Law Report. There were other defections and offshoots, notably the Guild Socialists, but it was to the parent society that I found myself engaged this summer in the character of American Lecturer, not without misgivings that the Fabians couldn't be what they once were, or they wouldn't have had me. Could I have imagined that the implications of a Fabian summer included fox trotting with George Bernard Shaw and acting a leading part in my own play burlesquing one of our most valued institutions to which I myself had played prophet, I should probably have avoided it, and so lost the most memorable of my European vacations.

The Fabian Summer School for this year occupied the premises of a large

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

private school at Prior's Field in the lovely shire of Surrey, during the month of August. There was a sprinkling of Americans in attendance, and a professional Irishman come down from London to explain that the Irish Revolutionists were more long-suffering and noble-souled than any other revolutionists (which is very likely the case). This information did not, however, in the least affect the characteristic British detachment of the Fabians. That was what struck the Americans, the preponderance of local English interests, and the fact that whether it were the League of Nations, Irish Freedom, or the Rates that was discussed, there was an apparent failure to evoke the disposition to do something about it which characterizes American gatherings of this quality. If it had not been for an experience which I shall undertake later and probably unsuccessfully to describe, I might have been still in the dark as to how the "permeation" of the English mind by the Fabian doctrine is accomplished.

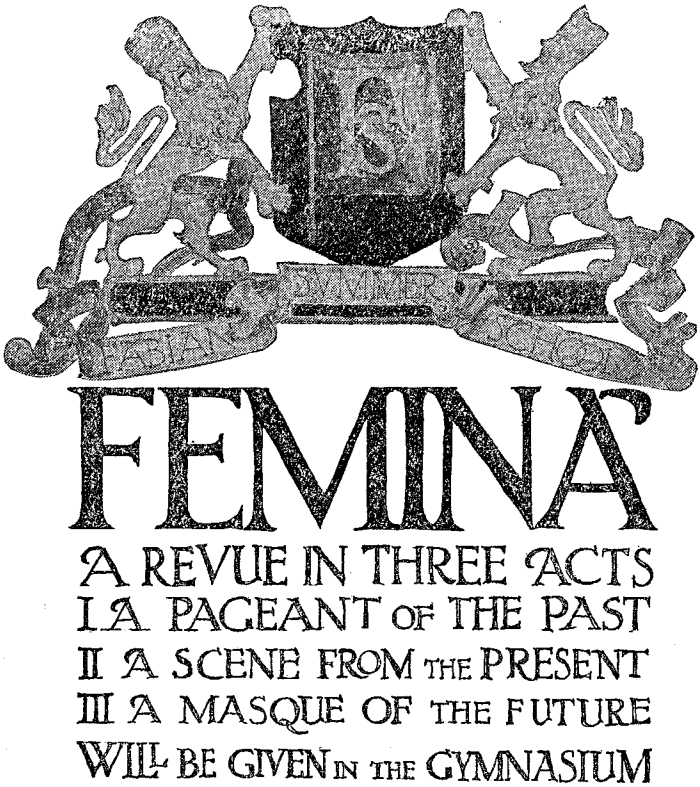
Oddly, the one international problem which struck a spark was American Prohibition as discussed by our own Jessie Havens Butler. Prohibition was not on the original program, but actually received as much attention as all other combined international topics. One other subject of Anglo-American irritation came up in a fashion which compensated us for much that has recently been written and said in England about American intolerance in connection with the suppression of books under the Comstock Act. It came up in reference to the stoppage of Dr. Marie Stopes's book "Married Love", which in England had been well received. It is true that the English suppressed Havelock Ellis's work, so that his profound scientific contribution can only be purchased by his countrymen in New York, but for the moment English criticism chose to overlook that circumstance and to consider the stoppage of "Married Love" as an evidence of our failure to arrive at national adulthood.

The truth about these two contradictions is that in England science is so newly made respectable, if it is quite, that sex discussion in the severity of scientific terminology appears indecently clothed. On the other hand the American, whose cradle science has rocked, finds himself put out of countenance by the lush and, to his thinking, often lascivious sentimentality with which sex information unblushingly disports itself before the European mind.

Now I had promised myself that when Dr. Stopes came down from London to lecture on Women as Mothers, I would attempt some clarification of a question which had brought my country into undeserved repute; but I reckoned without the invincible British proprieties which Mr. Wells and Mr. Galsworthy have called by more acidly descriptive names. Dr. Stopes on arriving had been notified that her lecture must be deleted of all significant information on the subject of sex. This from the Fabians, and under a director who went from that office to prison for the sake of her opinion on the iniquity of the present British Rates!

There were other evidences of the Anglo-American entente of conventional attitudes. At times when the younger members were on their feet I could have imagined myself somewhere east of Fifth and south of Twenty-third without closing my eyes. There was Mr. Joad, with his hurt intolerance of American intolerance, and Joseph Cohen declining the Com-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



munity Theatre movement for America on the ground of its being an insufficient substitute for the Socialist party, in that kindly spirit with which, when I was fresh to New York and used to try to make suffrage speeches, the New York contingent—Heaven knows they ought to have been thankful for *anything* fresh on the suffrage question—used carefully to stroke my arguments back into the pattern of their standardized propaganda.

There is a ritual of discussion among the Fabians which renewed my conviction, daily, that there is such a thing as the American temperament. First you lecture, then you are asked questions, finally you are discussed, all of which you are expected to meet with an unmoved countenance. After this you are allowed to answer as much as you can remember, which puts a speaker accustomed to the instant uptake of American debate at a serious disadvantage. One wonders if this habit of making a ritual of debate, no doubt the temperamental expression of a people whose favorite and most frequent dessert is milk pudding, isn't partly responsible for the incalculably slower movement of social response. One felt sure of it, hearing Lee Wilson Dodd describing two years of attempted pure milk and housing reform which accomplished less than would have been managed by any small town

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

women's club in the middle west in three months.

Between the lectures there were long walks in lovely Surrey byways, much tennis, folk dancing in the gymnasium, and jazz in the evening. Every Friday night there was a revue in which the Fabians wholeheartedly burlesqued one another to their own great delight, and with that feeling for character which has always distinguished the English novelists. Even the American members did not escape, though one felt a measure of consideration for our national sensitiveness which is, one suspects, one of the inescapable handicaps of a continuing democracy. It is only when personal idiosyncrasies are the hall mark of an accepted social caste that its members cease to wince under the descrying finger and no doubt we afforded the material for revues. One understands in a long stay in any European society, how inevitable it is that the American should talk a great deal about himself, realizing that his chief justification is a background which is not only unfamiliar but unimaginable; about which, until the last two or three years, the European has not been even intelligently curious. The Americans at the Fabian Society this summer appreciated that they had been spared, and responded at the last with their share of the entertainment in a burlesque of one of our least understood institutions, the Court of Domestic Relations. To the English who have accepted with complacency the existence in their midst of a class of professional corespondents, as a corrective to their divorce laws, the very idea of a court of domestic relations raises a faint, derisive horror. So we played it up to them in the key of their own recent reactions, and the happy Fabians rocked with laughter. That was at the end of the week devoted to Women's Interests, and the announcement of it posted in the Common Room bore the Fabian device, with Webb and Shaw rampant, that decorates this account of it.

To most people outside of England, the Webbs, Sidney and Beatrice, and Bernard Shaw *are* the Fabians. As an example of the imposing, the monumental impression that can be made by a married pair working in entire intellectual complement, the Webbs are unsurpassed. It is to them the Fabians owe the sky-piled pyre of economic fact on which it is expected the existing social order will finally be immolated. I seldom feel that conflagration so near at hand as I did when I heard Beatrice Webb tell the assembled Fabians that prayer is one of the indispensable items of successful economic and sociological research. We worked over that ground pretty throughly the next morning, Mrs. Webb and the American Lecturer, pacing up and down the grass walk, touching the necessity of saturating all our experiences of the heart or of the intellect in the older, more experienced layers of being, before suffering them to crystallize as forms of social procedure.

It was directly afterward that I had the experience before referred to, of admission to the collective mind of the English.

It was the quiet end of the afternoon; there was a hot smell of roses in the air, pricked from every corner of the lovely English gardens with shafts of cheerful laughter. I was leaning against the parapet by the lily pond, thinking of nothing in particular when, by such degrees that I am unable to fix the precise moment of its happening, England laid a warm, covering hand on me. What had been an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American observer was lost in the sudden onset and lapsing of wave on wave of intimacy so perfect that it was only by the narrowest margin of alien consciousness that I was aware of what was going on in me. No, it was not because, like most people, I have inherited English strains. I'm French too, yet permanently outside the French consciousness. I'm Scotch also, by descent, but besides thinking that a handsome Scot is the handsomest of men, I have no Celtic affinities. It was simply that the collective English mind had widened suddenly and made room for me. This is the peculiar gift of the English, the source of their genius for politics which has distinguished them among nations.

Perhaps this inclusion in the English consciousness, which was not for this occasion only, had something to do with my falling so readily into the Shavian cult when Mr. Shaw came down for the whole of the last week; for how could Shaw so successfully alternately tickle and annoy the public sense of England if he were not completely inside it? One recognizes him instantly, quite the tallest man in any company, straight as a pine that has stayed a full-orbed moon on its top. The fox-colored hair and beard have gone moon-white around the Indian summer glow of his face, reflecting the autumnal mellowness of his mind.

There is an extraordinarily clean-blown look about Shaw at sixty-five, such a windy, star-bright look as one surprises occasionally at the edge of October evenings. Of the Irish impishness that made him once so exasperating in debate, there is left spiritual dexterity that pricks you to join him in what must never be mistaken as a statement of Shaw's belief, but the search for that which is worthy to be believed.

It is this search for reality informing all his talk, that makes Shaw so misleading to quote. He suffers the fate of all brilliant people, that of being lost in the blaze in his own fireworks. What he said to the Fabians was the speech of a Socialist to Socialists, and not to be attempted by the uninitiate. Of things said in conversation, besides the impression of an incorruptible geniality, there remain glints and flashes.... "Irish independence? Well, I'm a Socialist, I'm not so much for independence,...interdependence...a characteristic island civilization. We might produce it...we've never really had an island parliament, you know...."

"Birth control...what right have you to say to life, It shall not be? How do you know you didn't struggle with your parents to be born as much as ever parents struggled to prevent you...a continuing process of life.... What do we really *know!*"

"What's a book, once it's done?" he said. "My books mean very little to me...the finish to a phase of thinking....Tell your niece not to go into the theatre unless she can't help it. As a career it's not worth it...it's an expression...one must be satisfied to be used."

Finally we talked of his coming to America. That was at Hern Bay, where the Guild Socialists were in session. At Canterbury seven miles away I had run into Sinclair Lewis coming out of the Cathedral Close, and learned that he had sold 300,000 copies of his book. What else could I do but produce as my own particular counter-irritant, that I was on terms with G. B. S. which permitted me to take promising young American authors to tea with him without waiting to be invited. Mr. Shaw does not really take tea, which gave him more time to talk.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This he did, looking not unlike some ancient pagan deity consenting to be pleased with mortals. Meanwhile we held our cups and breathed softly not to break the spell. W. K. Ratcliffe was there, and one or two Guilders. I recall a lad with a stiff leg and a distinguished service order and the engrossed, uplifted watchfulness of a happy dog, eyes on his master....I asked G. B. if it were true that he had refused a million dollars for his film rights because the producer had insisted on talking art when Shaw wished to talk money.

It was true, he admitted, twinkling reminiscently over the kind of art talk an American film manager had been primed with, expressly to talk to Shaw. "But the truth was," said G. B., "that I had my lawyer figure it out for me, and found that after I had paid the American tax, the English tax, and the super-taxes on that million, I should be about fifteen thousand dollars out of pocket."

We wished to know if that meant that he would never come to the United States at all. The only other way that the possibility had been presented to him, had been to be led about by a lecture bureau and exhibited for the most money. "How could I let a man sign up for me, when I might say something the first day that would upset all his calculations?" he protested.

What I proposed was that we should form a Shaw Committee which would permit him the greatest number of public appearances compatible with entire personal freedom. "I ought to have come ten years ago," he said. But at the last there was yielding in his look. It could be managed I think. It should be managed. Even if the only way is to invite the Fabian Society to hold its next summer session in New York.

ENEMIES

By Laura Benét

I AM afraid of the dark
That it will not let me alone;
The intimacies of its silence
Would kindle a stone.

But I'm more afraid of the light
For its spaces snatch my breath,
And make me question the time
I shall travel with death.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SKETCH BOOK

ON TAKING YOUR HUSBAND'S NAME IN VAIN

By St. John Ervine

I HEARD lately of a lady who vigorously exemplified "the triumph of hope over experience", as Dr. Johnson defined re-marriage, for she has had three husbands, two of whom are alive and reputed to be flourishing. The singular thing about this lady is not that she has been married three times, for many persons have voluntarily suffered such a fate, but that although her third husband and she are living in what Boswell called "connubial felicity", she insists on being called by the name of her first and only deceased husband. This insistence would appear to be a touching avowal of devotion to the memory of number one, unlikely, I imagine, to stir any responsive emotion in the breasts of the second and third husbands, were it not for the fact that the first husband had a title and the other two are commoners. He was a lord! I thought to myself, "This lady is a sort of Vicar of Bray. Husbands may come and husbands may go, but she will still be Lady Annabel Dismay!" And thinking of her, I thought also of some clever women whom I met in America a year or so ago, whose feminist faith is so pronounced and hearty that they refuse altogether to share their husbands' names. My lady of title only refuses to share the names of any husbands she may contract or has contracted since the decease of the first one, but my American friends decline to share the name of any husband, dead or alive, first or last. Each of them is willing to be endowed with a man's worldly goods, but not with his surname. She will live with him, but will not be labeled by him. She will bear his children, but will not bear his name. She will suffer all of the inconveniences of marriage—and there are many of them—but she will not enjoy one of the conveniences.

The excuse made for this refusal is more honorable to the American ladies than the excuse made for the lady of title who insists on keeping the name of her first husband while she is living with her third; but it does not appear to me to be so practical. After all, there are some social advantages readily yielded to Lady Annabel Dismay which would not be yielded, readily or otherwise, to plain Mrs. Dismay. It is hardly flattering to the lady that she should use a title to obtain prestige which she seems incapable of winning on her personal merits, but since that prestige appears to be worth possessing, she may be said to have a common-sensible sort of mind, though not, perhaps, a highly idealistic one. At the sacrifice of a little pride, she obtains a considerable amount of attention and deference from subordinate persons which is no doubt very gratifying, besides being exceedingly useful. It is otherwise with my American friends. They do not secure any social advantages or amenities through their behavior. On the contrary, they must occasionally lose some. She gives up some of her pride, but they insist on the possession of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more than is reasonable, and as always happens to people who do that, they must now and then have to endure contumelious treatment.

They say that a woman who abandons her maiden name on marriage commits a spiritual outrage on herself and is a traitor to her sex by acknowledging socially a superiority in the male which she denies politically. By giving up her own name and accepting his in exchange for it, she acknowledges that he has the right to impose his name upon her and that she is his inferior. That point of view is hardly so sensible, when deeply considered, as it seems when superficially considered. A woman who has established a reputation as a novelist under her maiden name is obviously at a disadvantage if, after marriage, she publishes subsequent books under her new name. The public which knows and likes the stories of Miss Susan Smith-Smythe will not easily recognize the same author in Mrs. Richard Robins-Robinson, and unless she continues to use her maiden name for publishing purposes, she will not only have to begin a new career with her husband, but also one with her public. That, however, is a matter easily arranged without indignity to anyone. It may be said that there is trouble and inconvenience in having to explain that Mrs. Richard Robins-Robinson is Miss Susan Smith-Smythe, "the writer, you know!" but they cannot be any greater than were the trouble and inconvenience of explaining that Miss Mary Ann Evans was "George Eliot, the writer you know!" or the still greater trouble of explaining that Miss Mary Ann Evans really remained Miss Mary Ann Evans when she appeared to be Mrs. George Henry Lewes. It certainly is not so difficult to explain that Mrs. Robins-Robinson is Miss Susan Smith-Smythe as it would be, in certain circumstances, to explain that Miss Smith-Smythe is really Mrs. Robins-Robinson! There must be a considerable amount of embarrassing and even incomprehensible explanation made before a registration clerk can be persuaded to think otherwise than cynically when Miss Susan Smith-Smythe and Mr. Richard Robins-Robinson ask for a bedroom at his hotel; and chambermaids, notoriously austere persons, must surely be confirmed in their worst suspicions about the "goings on" in high society when they find Lady Annabel Dismay openly sharing apartments with Mr. Small Beer whom she somewhat brazenly describes as her husband. There may be hypocrisy in persons pretending to be married when they are living in what is technically known as sin—though hypocrisy is sometimes the tribute which vice pays to virtue—but there is more than hypocrisy, there is sheer silliness, in people who insist on behaving as if they were not married when in fact they are.

For practical purposes, we may assume that any custom which has survived for centuries has done so because the generality of mankind have found it to be a convenient custom. We do not call a married woman by the surname of her husband either to insult or to degrade her, but because it is socially convenient to do so. It is definitely useful in our intercourse with other people to know that this man and that woman are married to each other. We are saved, for example, from the unpleasantness and embarrassment of saying inappreciative things about a man to his wife by the fact that she has been introduced to us as Mrs. So-and-so. Heaven knows what social chaos would be caused if

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

married women were to insist on being introduced as Miss This-or-That! The inappreciative things we say about a man may be justly and sincerely said, but we cannot expect his wife to like them or to like us for saying them; and since social relationships are made possible as much by the things we do not say as by those we do, mankind has had to invent a number of signs by which we may readily recognize the people to whom we may safely say true or malicious things and the people to whom it is not safe to say them. Mrs. Robins-Robinson can see the fun of your calling Mr. Johns-Johnson a pernicious ruffian or an unprincipled scoundrel, but I doubt whether she will see much fun in such descriptions when applied to her husband. It may be good for her to know how the world regards him, but she will not thank you for enlightening her, assuming that she believes a word you say; and in any event it cannot be good for you to discover that you have been saying such things about him to his wife when you fondly imagined you were saying them to a single woman. You will certainly be a little more discreet or, as some would say, hypocritical when next you engage in conversation with an apparent spinster.

As a matter of social convenience, therefore, everything can be said for the custom of husband and wife sharing the same name—whether that name be the husband's or the wife's is immaterial—and there is nothing to be said for the proposal that each should retain the pre-marriage name. There might be something to be said for the suggestion that names, as well as persons, should be joined together in holy matrimony, so that Miss Smith and Mr. Robinson, on marrying, should become Mr. and Mrs. Smith-Robinson, were it not for the fact that social convenience would be ill-served when the little Smith-Robinsons grew up and married the children of the Brown-Johnsons. Millicent Smith-Robinson and George Brown-Johnson, on marrying, would become Mr. and Mrs. Smith-Robinson-Brown-Johnson. The difficulty of announcing the names of the third and fourth generations of the Smith-Robinsons and the Brown-Johnsons would be more than any butler would relish!

But it is when we consider the use of the husband's name by the wife as an outrage on her individuality that we discover how thin is the argument for a woman keeping her maiden name after her marriage. Why should she refuse to be known by the name of her husband whom she has chosen for herself, and continue to be known by the name of her father whom she has not chosen? If it is an outrage on her spiritual nature to be called Mrs. Richard Robins-Robinson when she has freely consented to love, honor, and live with Richard—is, in fact, most eager to do so—how much more diabolical must be the outrage of having to endure the name given to her at her birth by one of her parents, and that one, in her judgment, the less important of the two, for whom she may or may not feel affection? We choose our friends and our lovers, but our relatives are imposed upon us. A woman can only escape from this indignity of answering to a name not of her choosing by marrying and adopting a name not of her husband's choosing. She, indeed, has more choice in that matter than he had. He has to be Richard Robins-Robinson, whether he likes it or not, but she need not be Mrs. Richard Robins-Robinson unless she chooses to be. I confess I see no way out of the difficulty other than

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sensibly recognizing that it is not a difficulty at all. To take your husband's name in vain, that is to say, to take it and not use it, may comfort a woman's sense of her own value, but it is a very bothersome business and is hardly worth the trouble. And, after all, millions of women for centuries have endured the indignity without noticing that it is an indignity. An indignity which is not known to be one is not an indignity: it may actually be a delight.

CARL SANDBURG

By Sherwood Anderson

HE comes into a room where there is company heavily and slowly, staring about. His eyes are small and blue-faded. Everyone knows a personage has arrived but there is no swagger to him.

He is not a physically strong man although he looks like the stuff out of which champion middleweights are made—a fighter who has given up fighting, gone out upon another road, out of condition for fighting. His eyes are not strong and he reads little. He is an eternal sitter-up o' nights drinking quantities of black coffee.

In conversation concerning the two subjects that absorb him—labor and poetry—he is unsure of himself, makes startling statements hesitatingly and covers his uncertainty with a blustering manner. There is no intellectual smartness and oddly enough no intolerance.

A distinguished Frenchman came to my house and wanted much to meet Sandburg so I had him up for an evening. They sat and stared at each other—both helpless. Sandburg took from his pocket a paper covered with figures and began to tell the Frenchman of the number of tons of coal mined in the state of Illinois each year, the number of miles from Chicago to Dallas, Texas, how many railroads come into Chicago, what Mr. Gary said at the time of the steel strike.

Silence settled down upon the two men. One might have cut the silence into little squares and rolled it into balls.

I led Sandburg to the piano and he began to sing, thumping steadily on two or three chords.

His voice is mellow and rich and he has the gift of song. He sang nigger songs, a song of the boll-weevil, one about Jesse James, another about a tough girl of the city streets whose lover had proved unfaithful.

Sandburg singing, naively, beautifully, was something the Frenchman understood and loved. Later he told me that the evening was one of his really fine experiences in America. On that evening we were all so absorbed that while Sandburg sang a robber crawled in at a window and going into his sleeping room robbed the Frenchman of his clothes, his money, and his luggage—thus giving him, in addition to his evening with Sandburg, a strikingly true picture of what life in Chicago is like. I've a notion that he went home to France inclined toward the suspicion that Sandburg and I were in league with the robber.

There is a growing tendency, as his fame goes up in the world, to speak of Carl Sandburg as a He man, an eater of raw meat, a hairy one. In Chicago newspaper local rooms he is spoken of as John Guts. I do not think of him so although I've a suspicion that he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sometimes writes under the influence of this particular dramatization of his personality.

Buried deep within the He man, the hairy, meat eating Sandburg there is another Sandburg, a sensitive, naive, hesitating Carl Sandburg, a Sandburg that hears the voice of the wind over the roofs of houses at night, a Sandburg that wanders often alone through grim city streets on winter nights, a Sandburg that knows and understands the voiceless cry in the heart of the farm girl of the plains when she comes to the kitchen door and sees for the first time the beauty of our prairie country.

The poetry of John Guts doesn't excite me much. Hairy, raw meat eating He men are not exceptional in Chicago and the middle west.

As for the other Sandburg, the naive, hesitant, sensitive Sandburg—among all the poets of America he is my poet.

MENCKEN AND MENKEN
or
THE GIFT OF TONGUES

By William McFee

THERE is something to be said for the Æsopian fox who lost his tail. He made the best of a bad job. By careless neglect he found himself bereft of a beautiful and useful part of his personality. Without loss of time he began a publicity campaign. He employed scientists who declared that tails were germ-carriers. He interested educators who discouraged tails in the schools. The vixen's clubs invited him to lecture, and passed a number of resolutions calling for legislation prohibiting tails everywhere....

But what extenuation can one find for a fox, renowned for his courage and cunning, blessed with one of the finest, stiffest, and most bushy tails in the world, who preaches that not only are foxes better off without tails, but that the ideal fox has not sufficient sense to distinguish between the bark of a dog and the cluck of a hen?

To abandon the allegory, H. L. Mencken has demonstrated once more the eternal truth that very clever men must have their pet folly. It is most extraordinary how often a man of indubitable genius will founder in this most fatal quicksand of language-mongering. Many years ago, say in 1901, Bernard Shaw, then a newspaper man writing under a number of pen names, used phonetic spelling as an excuse to write immense letters to the press. The old "Morning Leader" would contain column after column of Shaw's amusing piffle about the mistakes we poor Englishmen made in pronouncing our own tongue. Spelling seems to have the same fascination for brilliant minds that perpetual motion and the punctureless tire have for young mechanics. But young mechanics have the great justification that they seek a stark utility beyond the realms of art. The spelling reformer has never betrayed the ultimate motives of his mania.

It is almost incredible that it should be necessary to call the attention of so shrewd a critic to the fact that a word may be logical and clear and correct, and ugly to look at. Yet Mr. Mencken seems never to have reflected that the beauty of a book may be enhanced not only by the arrangement of the words on the page but by the arrangement of the letters in the words. To take Mr. Mencken's own examples, *axe* and *centre* are prettier than *ax* and *center*. Which is possibly the reason why Mr.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mencken dislikes them. *Honour, harbour, tenour* are actual English words, not phonetic symbols like *mazda* and *veritite* and *oxide*. There is also another reason for that exasperating *u*, if I may whisper it. *Honour* is pronounced *honour*, not *honor*, whereas *ancestor* is pronounced that way, not *ancestour*. Of course, no one will ever believe an Englishman knows anything about pronouncing his own tongue. Scots, Celts, Welsh, Germans, and Americans unite in crushing him if he raise ever so mild a protest at their weird and wonderful emendations. Many English, out of consideration for the foibles of others, change their own pronounciation to oblige, and for a quiet life.

In brief, words of the *honour* and *tenour* type are rightly spelled with the extra vowel not only because they are thereby identified with a particular meaning, but because the genius of the language demands it. One might almost say that we spell them that way for the same reason Mr. Mencken retains the double consonant in his name instead of dropping it as idiotic or nonsensical. Mr. Mencken demands further information about our peculiar fads, and it is singular that he never by any chance asks a question that an English man of letters cannot answer. Why add an *e* to *annex* and *form?* Because, your honour, *annex* is one thing and *annexe* another. Because *form* has a multitude of meanings active and substantive, whereas *forme* is a technical term. *Kerb* is a noun with a definite meaning, and *curb* is a noun and a verb of general application. When we come to *gaol* and *jail*, I am afraid Mr. Mencken will laugh if I contend that *gaol* is the better word. It has, to an Englishman, more significance than *jail*. Its appearance in a sentence has a sombre and foreboding effect upon that sentence. It is as much superior to *jail* as the German word *verloren* is to the French word *perdu*. Moreover, although I fear Mr. Mencken is by now so furious that he will not listen, we pronounce it *gaol*, not *jail*....With regret one has to call attention to another point which Mr. Mencken has missed. Our word *superior* does not come direct from the French. It comes direct from the Latin. The French expression *Seine Supérieure* would be translated *Upper Thames* not *Superior Thames*. And it is the rule in English grammar when forming an adjective from a noun to modify the spelling. Mr. Mencken will find the same astounding idiosyncrasy in Italian. Mr. Mencken has not given this matter adequate attention. Twenty-five years ago English newspapers had *patent-insides*. I can remember them.

Mr. Mencken professes to ignore, in considering the new American Language, both "the jargon of the intellectual snobs and the gibberish of the vulgar". I think he is scarcely wise. To the stranger who comes to dwell in America both the jargon and the gibberish are revelations of the possibilities of the English tongue. What Mr. Mencken calls "the everyday discourse of ordinary educated folk" differs very little from the discourse of the same sort of folk in England. Nothing is more puzzling to an Englishman after reading American fiction and newspapers than to come here and find ordinary people speaking ordinary good English with practically no provincialisms or slang intermixed. The main difference is that the American attempts to explain to you how he *feels*, whereas an Englishman is reluctant to admit the existence of emotion at all.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But out in the open one can enjoy true sport. What joy to discover that when one needs a hair cut, one can enter a *tonsorial parlor!* And it almost robs the grave of victory and draws the sting of death to know that instead of an undertaker the family will call in a *mortuarian.* These, I take it, are what Mr. Mencken would call the jargon of the intellectual snobs. But "the gibberish of the vulgar" is equally alluring. It is the most vivid thing in the world. Mr. Mencken cannot persuade me he does not like it. I'll tell the world he does!

In all seriousness, however, the phrase "American Language" is scarcely needed yet except to indicate a certain peculiar offshoot of written English known as publicity writing. As far as I know there is nothing like it on earth. The Englishman tells you his pills are worth a guinea a box, or he begs you to "furnish with taste" at his store, or advises you to insist on a particular brand of mustard. The Frenchman or Spaniard hires a black-and-white artist who draws so extremely well that one simply has to pause and read the context. But the American publicity writer has lost touch with earth altogether. He has become so afflicted with the *cacoethes scribendi* that he will write whole pages of advertising about the cardinal virtues. I pick up a current periodical and I read:

> Towering above fear, buttressed with honor, meeting the assaults of circumstance with the strength of rightness, stands integrity.

Now to a European of average intelligence, this is a distinctly new departure—to write advertisements about an unmarketable abstraction. Of course the publicity man may argue that he is selling integrity. To that a European can offer no reply. It is something entirely beyond his experience.

To the man of letters, however, this particular adventure of the advertiser is serious. It implies that literature will have to abandon many forms and phrases and seek a means of expression not yet appropriated by the sales department. And the only means the present writer sees available at present is the continual use of good English. Mr. Mencken will never be able to use the American Language. It is already preempted. And in the future, when his own vigorous and sledgehammer style has been stolen by the publicity hounds, even Mr. Mencken may be forced to fall back on the despised English Language to distinguish his own essays from the advertisements.

THE NEW WORD IN PLAY PRODUCING

By Zona Gale

PRODUCING a play seems to me, as I have recently watched it, to be partly the art of dealing with people. And the new word in dealing with people is to deal with them, not to direct them.

Watching Mr. Brock Pemberton staging my play, I used to think that if one of the oldtime producers were to enter the theatre, he would say: "But this man is not doing anything. He just sits there." It was true that he seemed just to sit there, hour after hour. The director of my fears, he who stood tense or wild in the midst of the players and cried that fire from heaven had fallen on such and such a reading, or bit of business, or tempo —he was not in the theatre. Soon he will not be in any theatre. Or in any

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other creative work. Which means almost all work.

Instead there was, in this case, a man who sat in the house, half way back, and who at first said principally: "From the beginning, please." Or, "Once more, that scene." And very often: "Come now. Let's all help." There also was I who in those first days kept saying to him: "Don't you think that should be read so and so?" or "That oughtn't to be done so, just there" or "That isn't the right reading." And the invariable reply would be: "Let's let them get the lines first." "Let's see if they won't come to that in a day or two." In the first weeks of rehearsal I must have said these things literal scores of times and always to that same reply, delivered without impatience and without a shadow of turning.

Gradually, in instance after instance, it was clear that the suggestion which I had been so eager to make was either finding its way into the reading by the feeling of the actors, or was being supplanted by something of their own creation that was better. When I spoke of this—"It means so much more when they find out a thing for themselves," the producer said.

After a time, at the close of a rehearsal, he would go down to the front row and say: "I have a few notations —will you take them down?" He would make innumerable suggestions, and the company would note them on their parts. When a member of the company asked how a line should be read the first reply from the producer was usually: "How do you feel that line—what do you feel is the most natural reading?" Again and again he asked them for suggestions. If a line needed something and I could not make the suggestion, he would ask the one to whom it belonged to try to think of the thing he would like to say in such a situation. Some of the least unsatisfactory lines, therefore, came from the company themselves.

Often it seemed to me that the producer thought of himself as one of the company. And as if industrial difficulties might be solved if only all the cooperators in industry could recognize themselves in this way. That which Walter Hampden welcomes as "industrial and artistic cooperation" was assuredly here. It is the new word in industry as in art—the third word, the human factor. Yet in the end this play was shot through from first to last with the ideal of naturalism which all along had been the ideal of the producer—but he had developed it, he had not stamped it on from without.

This attitude cannot be unique. There must be others of the modern stage who are producing in this way, but it is not the old way, and it is not the way in which the public generally thinks of a production being made. Nearly everyone has said: "Isn't it a terribly difficult experience, having a play put on? Isn't it nervous work? Don't you have to fight for your own interpretation?" But it was not difficult. There was nothing "nervous" about it—excepting that one couldn't engage all the actors who applied for the parts. And as for my own interpretation, my fear was that they were sometimes reading a line in my way to please me when they knew it would be better some other way. I have always believed stage people to be the most likable people alive, and now I know it.

There is far more reason why play producing should be nervous work than that routine work should be so; because, first, there is no routine to follow and, second, everybody involved is in some degree a creative artist—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who carries his own authority. By reason of the daily intimacy and the swift work and the high pressure and the risk for everybody, it is true that irony or arbitrary authority or lack of sympathy could make of play producing about as uncomfortable an association as—any other association dominated by "nerves". Perhaps, as Dr. Joseph Jastrow once suggested, all these things are not alone in the domain of art and of ethics but of manners. Or perhaps it is merely that theatrical producers, in common with all other business men, are eliminating waste—waste nerves along with the rest. The roots of art are fed and watered by undivined agencies. In this case I believe that the work ran smoothly because the producer was more intent on getting out of every creative worker his creative bit than in remembering that he was the director and that his way was best. He was not only directing a play—he was dealing with people. The final art.

A LANDMARK PASSES

By Arthur Bartlett Maurice

THE Pension Vauquer is no more! Till yesterday, the structure which Henry James felicitously described as "the most portentous setting of the scene in all the literature of fiction" had, for a full hundred years, remained substantially true to the picture that Honoré de Balzac drew in the pages of "Père Goriot". The house and the garden with its well and graveled walk were there for the contemplation of the literary pilgrim. Over all there was the brooding silence of ten decades. But that was yesterday. There is little silence there today. For where Trompe-la-Mort whispered his cunning temptations in the ear of Eugène de Rastignac; where Goriot, the Lear of French fiction, wept over the ingratitude of his daughters; where, of an eventful eve-

The Pension Vauquer

ning, there came the tramping of feet, the clang of muskets against the pavement, and the ominous command: "In the name of the King and the Law!", now honks, not the horn of regal Renault or pompous Panhard, but the horn of the ubiquitous Ford, or of its French equivalent, the Citroen. The "most portentous setting of the scene in all the literature of fiction" has become an auto-service station.

"Mme. Vauquer (*née* de Conflans) is an elderly person, who for the past forty years has kept a lodging house in the Rue Neuve-Sainte Genevieve in the district that lies between the Latin Quarter and the Faubourg Saint-Marcel." These are the opening words of the novel that posterity seems to have accepted as Balzac's masterpiece, the most glorious stone of that vast edifice which is the Comédie Humaine. The house stood at the lower end of the Rue Neuve Sainte-Genevieve, just where the street begins to slope down to the Rue de l'Arbalète. Balzac, in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his day, found the quarter the ugliest and the least known of all the quarters of Paris. Ugly and unknown it remained all through the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. To find it today is like finding one's way to the heart of a maze. That remoteness had the virtue of preserving it till the last from the invasion of the modern Hun, the apartment constructing architect. Ugly as it is, it possesses an amazing fascination. With the dirt and squalor and gloom the glamour of the dark old world is there. Here is no Haussmannized Paris, but a vestige of the ancient Lutetia that knew the Valois. The shades of the Villon of history and of the Quasimodo of Hugo's fantastic imagination, lurk in such streets as the Rue Saint-Médard and the Rue Mouffetard.

Balzac identified the Pension Vauquer as being in the Rue Sainte-Genevieve. But the names of Paris streets are subject to frequent changes, and long ago the Rue Sainte-Genevieve became the Rue Tournefort. The actual number of what was till yesterday, by reason of its unchanged state, its romantic appearance, and its vivid associations, the show place among all the shrines of French fiction, was 24. From that doorway Eugène de Rastignac went forth in the night to make his way to the heights of the cemetery of Père Lachaise, and from its eminence to shake his fist at the city spread out beneath him with the ringing cry of defiance: "A nous deux maintenant!"

THE PRAIRIE TOWN

By Helen Santmyer

LOVERS of beauty laugh at this grey town,
Where dust lies thick on ragged curb-side trees,
And compass-needle streets lead up and down
And lose themselves in empty prairie seas.

Here is no winding scented lane, no hill
Crowned with a steepled church, no garden wall
Of old grey stone where lilacs bloom, and fill
The air with fragrance when the May rains fall.

But here is the unsoftened majesty
Of the wide earth where all the wide streets end,
And from the dusty corner one may see
The full moon rise, and flaming sun descend.

The long main street, whence farmers' teams go forth,
Lies like an old sea road, star-pointed north.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

Christmas and Christmas Presents—Advice to Those Who Would Give and Those Who Would Receive—Chaliapin—Rafael Sabatini—Sir William Robertson Nicoll's Seventieth Birthday—Novelists for Washington—Mr. and Mrs. Reginald McKenna—A Cry for a New Sherlock Holmes Book.

LONDON, *October* 1, 1921.

BY the time these notes are in print we shall be once more in the throes of Christmas. What we shall feel like I cannot pretend to say, but at the moment it seems as though the weather would be torrid, and accordingly one for the open air rather than for the study. Roaring fires will not have their place. Books which we have received as Christmas presents will not have their bindings curled as the result of too close proximity to the fire. Out of door hammocks, a warm sun upon the page, and a gentle slumber will be the order of the day. To one who has just returned from a summer holiday the thought of Christmas is singular, but if we are to have a warm Christmas perhaps it will merely be a sort of extension of the summer holiday. So be it. We must learn to sacrifice the book trade for another season.

Nevertheless, the book trade is waking up here, as I understand it shows signs of doing in America. The shops are full of books, and sometimes customers appear. I met a man the other day who boasted of having bought three copies of a book of my own. He was a friend indeed! Would that all my friends would do as he did. The others are more inclined to criticize the book from the gratuitous copy they have received. Books, I think, are more looked in the mouth than any other kind of gift horse. It is a weakness of ours that we do not value what has been given to us. I have noticed this in the case of things which have been given to myself. Not that I have many things given to me, unless I ask for them. I fancy I am like the girl in the anecdote, whose friends were discussing a suitable present. "I know," said one; "let's give her a book." "Oh," was the reply. "No. She's got one." I suppose they gave her a penwiper instead, unless she had to take the will for the deed. I am now engaged in a great Christmas present campaign. I have already commissioned a Royal blue silk dressing gown with primrose facings. But I don't expect I shall get it.

The best Christmas present is a book. It may be a bad book, but at least it is something which does not perish, and even a bad book can be scanned. Moreover, it can always be lent, and so lost. An ornament has to meet with a strange accident, and in any case donors seek their gifts upon the mantelpiece, and are restless if they miss the abhorred shapes. Ties have to be worn, however terrible their hues. Cigars have to be—well, one has to take a few puffs, and if the giver is a near relation the whole box has to disappear slowly, like the baseless fabric of a dream or the face of the Cheshire Cat in "Alice in Wonderland". Sweets and candied fruit go too quickly, and one cannot keep them to one's self. Only a book is truly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manageable. Would-be thieves are discomfited by the fact that one can claim it in virtue of the inscription. If it is a bad book it can be laid down without a qualm; if it is a good book it is a lasting delight. There is no present like a good book. I must think of some good books. It would be useless to mention any here, because they would not reach me in time for the Day; but I shall tell my friends.

All this may suggest in me a somewhat grasping nature. It may appear as though I guided my friends in the way of my own wishes. Such a suggestion would be an injustice; but I will explain. For some years I noticed that presents at birthdays and at Christmas were growing fewer. Last year I received no presents at all on my birthday. Only one person recalled that I had a birthday. Such regret filled my heart at this neglect that I took steps to proclaim the omission. The result has been satisfactory. People are quite ready to give when they know that a gift is expected. Think how one feels over the question of tips to hotel servants. One knows they are expected; the whole difficulty is one of amount; and as the servants assuredly expect as much as they can get our gross overtipping is greatly in favor of a continuance of the tipping system. My advice therefore to those who would receive Christmas presents is to point out the most acceptable present. This, I say again, is a book. To the donors I think it should be said that all gifts are a greater satisfaction to the giver than to the recipient. It is the spirit, the kind thought, that matters.

If I were giving books I should do a very daring thing. I would give a book that I liked. It is the greatest compliment, and if the person receiving the book has the bad taste not to like it that book can be borrowed and thus kept without hesitation. One's own library is increased. The point to be noticed here is that it is inadvisable to give a book which one already possesses. I have known other presents given upon this system, always with satisfactory results. One person used to give me presents quite unsuited to any requirements of mine, and then kindly made use of the gifts himself until they were worn out. This he called living upon the communal system. He may also have been following the advice of a friend, which was: always give what the recipient would never in any circumstances buy for himself. This advice can be followed especially well in the matter of books. It is a cheering sight to see a donor settle himself calmly and comfortably by the Christmas fire with a book which he has himself just given. One feels his happiness as one's own, largely by comparison with one's own feelings of deprivation.

I hope these remarks will be found helpful. They are the consequence of long study and observation. Moreover, if the book given happens to be in fact a work by Stendhal or some other writer of the greatest delightfulness the joy of possession is incomparable. I do not know a joy greater than that of acquiring without effort a book long desired. And for the giver the words, "How did you know I wanted it?" are the finest reward in the world. To give the right thing is to taste a joy in comparison with which the joys of imagined paradises are as nothing.

* * * *

A joy I have just tasted is the invitation to attend the great Chaliapin concert in London. It came from the blue, was accepted over the telephone,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and its fulfilment was one of the true pleasures of my life. I had heard Chaliapin before, when Sir Joseph Beecham showed that he, as well as his son, the conductor and operatic organizer, was a musical enthusiast; and ever since then I had dreamed of the day when I should hear him again. It is not, of course, simply that Chaliapin is the greatest singer I have ever heard. He is more than that. He is the greatest actor I have ever seen, and his personality is one of the most dominating, if not the most dominating of all, that I have ever recognized. To see him the other night holding a huge audience so that it listened breathlessly to his lightest pianissimo, or working its enthusiasm to a pitch almost unbearable by his singing in other shades, was an experience not to be forgotten. Chaliapin was for some time kept out of England by some sort of agitation arising from political animosity; but now that the ban has been removed, and he is quite the correct thing from the society point of view, I expect we shall do all we can to prevent him from leaving us at all. I think he is going to America, also to sing on behalf of the Russian refugees, so American readers will have an opportunity of hearing his voice and of seeing his extraordinary domination of audiences.

* * * *

I am very glad to hear that Rafael Sabatini has had a success in the United States. He is a sincere and able writer of "costume" stories, and a most delightful man. For years he has been writing these stories of past times, with a much greater knowledge of the periods than is usually shown by practitioners in the historical novel. Those who like "Scaramouche", therefore, have before them a feast of the older novels, so that I see no end to the popularity of Sabatini now that he has been "discovered". An Italian by birth, and possessed of an exceptional knowledge of English as well as other languages, Sabatini can range the whole world in search of picturesque scenes and decorations. Moreover, he is not only a novelist, but has prepared for the stage dramatizations of several of his books. He is a great big fellow, with the most modest manner in the world, very far from the accepted notion of the literary man. Indeed he is not, in that sense, a literary man at all, although his knowledge of literature, and his appreciation of it, would compare favorably with that of many who are more pretentious in their display. He does not disdain the details of common life, a fact which makes him refreshing as a companion; for there is a common sense about his attitude toward things which makes all of interest and considerably eases interchange of conversation.

This is a trait which I should like to see celebrated. We have many writers with keen perceptions; but there is one class more to my own taste than some of the others. This is a class sometimes rather misunderstood. Where others talk about literature, and love it, and practise it, these men are the simple ones who do their work and who take a technical interest in the work of others, but who do not set up as literary lights and have no solvents or theories about art. It is very good to find a writer who has no public theories about art, who does not write about other writers, but lives simply and productively, doing the work that suits him best and not disdaining the work of others in a different genre. Most of the writers I know (and I am glad to think that my acquaintance is not restricted to writers, who as a class can sometimes be irri-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tating) are pursuing some peculiar theory of art whenever they read a book by another writer. They think it should be a different kind of book altogether. Well, there is room for all kinds of books, and our opinions of the different kinds and of the different writers is likely to vary with taste and age. Only the simple ones, by which I mean those with simple, unaffected tastes, get the real delight out of books. What would I not give to be one of them!

* * * *

And yet there is a fascination about the other thing also—the close and expert study of what is being written. To this also I cannot pretend. Few can give ripe understanding to the life and literature by which they are surrounded. The weak ones get cynical perhaps, or intolerant or envious; and only the strong ones remain. One of these strong ones is this month celebrating his seventieth birthday. I refer to Sir William Robertson Nicoll. Another is Professor Saintsbury. Professor Saintsbury has probably read everything ever written, and while one may at times be horrified by his judgments one finds next these some appraisement so excellent that one hesitates to dismiss the verdict which has seemed so wrong. Take, for example, Mr. Saintsbury's prefaces to Messrs. Dent's edition of Balzac. It is amazing that an Englishman could have written them with such profound appreciation. Take, again, his notes on Paul de Kock. They are admirable. And then get hold of his short history of English literature. It is crammed with information, often expressed in a way to make one writhe, but full of news from the depths of an incomparable experience. In other work I believe that Mr. Saintsbury annoys æsthetic students by some insensitiveness of perception. What remains is enough for most of us. He is a full man. His interest in letters is humane.

If we say that of Professor Saintsbury, what can we say of Sir William Robertson Nicoll? Here is this marvelous journalist, who knows everybody and everything with a minute and pitiless knowledge, to whom not only books but people are the simplest of delights; and we find that he is seventy years of age, old enough to be a father to some of us, and yet as juvenile and whimsical as the youngest. Sir William can talk for an afternoon and at the end of it be as yet but turning back the flyleaf of the tremendous store of experience which he has garnered. Ask him any question about the life of the books of England during his long career, and hear how immediately he answers. Hear him speak on the books which a man must read if he is in this profession or that. Listen to his appraisements. In all there is this wise and keen unsentimental understanding, so rare in men of any age. It is not only that the judgments are suggestive, it is that they are direct. Sir William has not to pull aside a veil of theory or prejudice: he is a realist. His judgments have always been the judgments of a realist. He is sure because he has thought much. One may disagree: I do not say that one can always accept his verdicts. The point I am making is that they are the verdicts of a man who knows things from the inside. He is no amateur, but a professional. He is expert. And whatever is said by the expert will command attention simply because of that enormous fund of experience and understanding lying behind the individual expression of opinion. Poe said that it was the quality and not the quantity of obser-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vation that mattered, and it is the associations of a richly filled mind that give significance to a man's every utterance. It is the shrewdness of understanding behind any speech which separates that speech from its more flowery rivals. What I want to say is that there are no flies on Sir William.

* * * *

I hear that two of the best-known of our novelists—at least— are bound for Washington, to write about the Conference. This, at a time when the constitution of the official party is still a matter of conjecture, is stimulating. The reports written by these two men should make lively reading, as they are both free critics of public affairs, and have some authority behind their pronouncements. Do not be surprised to find, therefore, that strange things are sent over the wires. There will be a little less of that diplomatic wrapping which has to cloak the true feeling of many correspondents. This is all to the good, as it makes to some extent for the much-desired thing, open diplomacy. Both men are extremely sympathetic to the American view, and opposed to all that may be described as sharp practice in politics. It is a testimony to the international importance of the Conference that our newspapers, and yours, should seek representatives so free from official bondage and so well known for their independence of judgment and fearlessness of the consequences of expressing that judgment.

* * * *

Reginald McKenna and his wife, who are on their way to the United States, will be something new in the way of typical visitors. Mr. McKenna is, of course, one of the ablest financiers in this country, although he was recently described in a local paper (in the district in which he had taken a summer house) as "an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer". He is a keen bridge player and a terrifying golfer. His golf playing is the most mathematical thing ever known in that line. In partnership with his wife he can take the heart out of any rival pair in a foursome. Taking the club in his hand, he consults the prospects. "I shall drive 180 yards," he says—and does so. "You", he adds to his partner, "will drive 120 yards....The ball will be two yards from the hole"—and it is so. How can one play against such calculation? His wife is a good musician and her interest in and knowledge of current literature is exceptional. This is not only in belles lettres, but in the more abstruse branches of literature. Mr. McKenna is chairman of one of our biggest banks, which a short time ago amalgamated with another bank. It happens that this bank is the one which honors my own cheques, but I can never remember its name. The other night, when I was filling up a club cheque form, I was robbed of all means of recollecting the bank's name. "What on earth is the name of my bank?" said I, in perplexity. "There's the chairman sitting over there," answered a waggish friend. "Ask him." It was in that glance that recollection came, for I knew the name of the bank of which Mr. McKenna is the head. It will be of interest to novel readers to know that Mr. McKenna is the uncle of the novelist so deservedly popular both in America and in England.

* * * *

John Galsworthy's new novel, "To Let", seems to be scoring a considerable success here. It is the last volume of the Forsyte "Saga", and it tells a very simple and poignant love story about two of the younger members of the family. English people have a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

warm corner in their hearts for the Forsytes, and I should think would be loath to let them go altogether. By this I do not mean that a clamor will reach Mr. Galsworthy similar to that aroused by the death of Sherlock Holmes; but it will be enough. I cannot describe the thrill I received the other day in a provincial town, on seeing a big poster for "The Strand Magazine" bearing the words: "New Sherlock Holmes Story". I suppose no modern figure has ever been such an electrifying one. Most people seem to love stories about crime and its detection, and the methods of Holmes have been from the start exactly what we all needed. While I was away I bought a copy of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "Mystery of Cloomber", which I had not read. To my regret it is not about Holmes, but belongs to a rather older genre. However, it is very readable, and if I ever read at all on summer holidays I should by now have finished it. The trouble is, that what we want is Holmes. It is to be hoped that there will one day be a fresh batch of Holmes stories, for there can be no question that we shan't be happy till we get it. What could be more delightful than a Christmas with snow outside, and a warm fire within, and drawn curtains after a vigorous day in the crisp air; and a cigar or pipe, with suitable accompanying refreshment, and a new volume of Sherlock Holmes? The mere thought of such a heavenly situation fills me with expectation. Positively Sir Arthur must give ghosts and fairies a rest and tell us some more earthly romances of the detective.

SIMON PURE

CAGES

By Stirling Bowen

FOUR walls enclose men, yet how calm they are!
They hang up pictures that they may forget
What walls are for in part, forget how far
They may not run and riotously let
Their laughter taunt the never-changing stars.

In circus cages wolves and tigers pace
Forever to and fro. They do not rest,
But seek so nervously the longed-for place.
Our picture-jungles would not end their quest,
Or pictures of another tiger's face.

On four square walls men have their world, their strife,
Their painted, framed endeavors, joys and pain;
And two curators known as man and wife
Hang up the sunrise, wipe the dust from rain
And gaze excitedly on painted life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BROADWAY, OUR LITERARY SIGNPOST

By Kenneth Andrews

AFTER all the most striking quality of Sinclair Lewis's standard history of Gopher Prairie, Minnesota, is its strict impartiality. The author's attitude is that of an entomologist who has for years patiently studied the habits of some negligible insect, and who most painstakingly transfers his voluminous notes to the printed page. He has no theory to prove about the insect; he is interested solely in discovering how it functions. "Main Street" is not so much an interpretation as it is a reference work, an encyclopædia on the fauna to be found clustering about remote railway stations.

From pages crammed with data about back yards, tin cans, and dirty streets Gopher Prairie emerges. It emerges in its ugliness and emptiness, its crude good nature and bluff wholeheartedness. Carol Kennicott is presented with the same precision, the same detachment. Brought into contact with Gopher Prairie she behaves in the only way she could behave, as a frog in the laboratory kicks and twitches in certain ways when certain acids are dropped on him. How well the author has sustained his nonpartizanship is best indicated by the partizanship of his readers. A referendum on the question, "What do you think of Carol Kennicott?" would divide the country into fairly equal camps. She would carry the metropolitan and industrial centres and lose heavily in towns under thirty thousand and in the rural districts.

This impartiality, which is the soul of the book, is the very thing to make its dramatization difficult. Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford get around the difficulty quite neatly—they simply ignore it. There is nothing impartial in their treatment of Carol. In their hands she is little more than a scapegoat. Fifteen minutes after her arrival in Gopher Prairie she takes a look up Main Street, wrinkles her nose and says, "There are a few things I'm going to do to this town", or something to that effect. That was not the way to introduce her. In the play, as in the book, her case should have been fairly presented. We should have felt that Carol was at least in earnest; we should have seen that she was goaded into making her crusade by real hunger of spirit; that, from her standpoint, the redemption of Gopher Prairie was a matter of self-preservation. We need not approve of what she does, but we should know why she does it. Otherwise strange things happen to the story. Will Kennicott himself seems something of a fool to put up with her. The Gophers seem normal, pleasant souls amazingly tolerant of this interloper from Minneapolis who insults them and their old home town. That is not "Main Street".

Still, for two acts, the play holds up surprisingly well. The attempt to distil into stage atmosphere all those pages of data on Gopher Prairie is more adroit than it seems to be. It is played before an atrocious cardboard

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

street scene which has the effect of reducing much of the authors' good work to the level of hick comedy. The card party in the Kennicott living room completes the picture of Gopher Prairie. We have a small town society evening in the raw with all its inane small talk, its petty neighborhood gossip, its boisterous and prolonged glee over nothing to speak of. Culturally it is pretty barren; and with a little encouragement we might share Carol's point of view, at least for the moment. But we get no encouragement. Carol makes a complete fool of herself. To stimulate a taste for the better sort of thing, and to awaken interest in her Little Theatre movement, Carol and Erik Valborg (who is an electrician in the play) recite a portion of Stephen Phillips's "Marpessa". This means nothing whatever to the Gophers; and after recovering from their consternation they laugh poor Carol out of the room; and the audience raucously joins them. It is amusing, but a shameful burlesque of what Carol really tried to do.

The scene in the bedroom, the best in the play, is a splendid feat of condensation. Here the true values of the book are preserved. Into this half hour is compressed all the monotony and petty routine of the Kennicotts' married life. Carol, for the time being, is a moving figure. Her impotent exasperation and rebellion are understandable, at least. And the act ends on a gorgeous moment with Kennicott starting off into the blizzard to respond to a call from old Valborg, with Carol stung out of her self-absorption and realizing at last the rugged heroism of the man she married.

But the last two acts narrow down to Carol and her woes, and the authors pay the penalty for their injustice to her. They have failed to interest us in Carol and her woes; we have no comprehension of her, and no patience for her; and the play naturally grows increasingly dull.

Arthur Richman, in his mild little last year's comedy, "Not So Long Ago", mildly suggested some of his qualifications as a dramatist. He seemed to have an easy glibness in the sketching of character. He seemed to have a delicate sense of atmosphere. He seemed to have the faculty of knitting into a compact pattern unrelated, trifling illustrations of his theme. All promising attributes for a new writer to have, and Mr. Richman was regarded as a dramatist of promise, who would do innocuous and pleasantly diverting little pastels, and do them fairly well. But such, it seems, was not the goal of his ambition. All those attributes, which were dimly foreshadowed in his first play, have been amazingly intensified. They might be said to have turned sour. The result is a limpid, poignant, most unpleasant tragedy called "Ambush", which has little to recommend it save the cold logic and relentless plausibility of its development.

For the tragedy of Walter Nichols is plausible enough once you accept the author's valuation of him. Nichols is presented as a thoroughly incompetent, gentle, middle-aged soul who means no harm to anybody, but who is totally bereft of what may be called the manly virtues. He is inefficient as a clerk, inefficient as a husband, woefully inefficient as a father. He is so weak that we are apt to be more irritated than touched by him. We feel that the ambush into which he is pressed is set for him, not by the inexorable hand of fate, but by his own weakness. He has been unable to give his daughter the blessings her acquisi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tive young soul craves, so she has gone out after them, and found them, and paid the price for them. Nichols, bewildered and inept, tries to do his duty as a father, but has not the faintest notion how to go about it. He invests the slender fortune he had been saving for her in wildcat oil stock and loses all of it. Worry over this makes him lax at the office and he loses his job. Rent day comes, and he has no money. He is beaten, helpless. There is no way out —for him. He accepts money for the rent from his daughter's current lover and takes a job from him, which makes his humiliation complete. Even his quaint honor, to which he has feebly clung, is sacrificed.

It is the unhappy story of a weakling's failure to stand up under fire; but it is not a stimulating or suggestive or exalting tragedy. It was all Nichols's fault in the first place and it is all his fault in the end; for even in the end a stronger man would have fought his way out. And if we have little love for Nichols we have still less for his family. The daughter seems needlessly brusque and sharp and callous; and the mother who encourages her own offspring in the life of easy virtue is the least prepossessing of all.

Still in judging the play we should of course grant the author his premise. He does not choose to tell an attractive story, but the story he does tell is well told. It is pared down to its essentials, it is compact with minute observation, the people are keenly and consistently portrayed. After the first act, where there is a little too much underlining and reemphasis, the grim tale moves grimly to its grim conclusion; and the clarity and incisiveness of the writing are faithfully conveyed through the acting and the producing of the play.

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Miss Lulu Bett" by Zona Gale (Appleton). In its published form the play has two last acts: the one the public liked and the one Miss Gale wrote first.

"Representative One-Act Plays by British and Irish Authors" edited by Barrett H. Clark (Little, Brown). A cumbersome title, but it does tell you what the book is. The plays—twenty of them—are representative; and the author gives biographical and bibliographical notes on each author.

"One Act Plays" by Alice Brown (Macmillan). "Joint Owners in Spain" and "The Hero", both of which were produced by Stuart Walker, are the high lights in this collection of nine plays; but there are others which are almost as good.

"Producing in Little Theaters" by Clarence Stratton (Holt). A great many things are packed into this comparatively short book. It is designed as a handbook for the harassed producer of amateur plays. A hundred full-length plays and a hundred one-act plays suitable for amateurs are listed; and a suggestive note (such as "for sophisticated only") is given under each title.

Booth Tarkington's "The Wren" gives the impression that it is a bright, vivacious Tarkington comedy suffering from low blood pressure. It does not seem to be quite its normal self. It should have much of the whimsicality and caprice of "Clarence", but is so subdued, so very discreet that it is not whimsical or capricious at all. It is as though the chill New England atmosphere, with which the author has suffused his play, has had an inhibitory effect on him, causing him to check himself cautiously at just the places where he had meant to be gayest.

Seeby, the very industrious young person who manages everything and everybody in Cap'n Olds's summer hotel, was surely just the person for Mr. Tarkington to write a play about. But he somehow fails to make of her

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the bustling, wistful, Barriesque little figure she might well have been. Perhaps her portrait is a little too lifelike; she is no more or less appealing than any youthful New England school teacher who runs her father's hotel in the summer time. And the rest of the play seems similarly underdeveloped. The material is there, but not much is done with it. The affair between Mrs. Frazee, from the city, and Roddy, the painter of terrible pictures, is such a very circumspect affair that it can scarcely serve as the axis around which to turn even so slight a play. Roddy does not care particularly for Mrs. Frazee, he just likes to talk to someone while he is painting. And she does not care much for him. Frazee who, naturally, turns up unexpectedly, is most perfunctory in his jealousy. He does not care much either. It was a violinist last winter, and now it is an artist; and he is not quite sure that he would mind if his wife did run away from him. Little Seeby adores Roddy, but he is so preoccupied with his financial difficulties that he cannot keep his mind on his love making. Frazee takes his wife back to the city, and Seeby goes up the beach with Roddy to talk to him while he paints; and that is the end of the story.

It is a provokingly absent-minded play.

"A Bill of Divorcement" by Clemence Dane is a carefully, cunningly wrought play. It treats of a phase of the divorce question which is English, not American. The audience is even asked to suppose that an amendment to the English divorce law which is pending has been passed. We may suppose that the play was written as propaganda in support of this English law. It is frankly a thesis play, and the thesis is one which has little to do with life in this country. Yet the impossible happens. So vivid is the story into which the author transmutes her thesis that the thesis, happily, is entirely forgotten; or rather it is absorbed into the story and serves if anything to stiffen it and root it even more deeply in reality.

It is rooted deeply in the realities of human experience. That is why it quickly transcends the special, local conditions which provide its background. That is why it is as poignantly moving in this country as it was in England. After all the special pleading is secondary. After all the play really grows out of the very human frailties of the three members of the Fairfield family, and each of them is really struggling for the right to live.

Margaret Fairfield, as we come to know her in the beginning, is not a particularly strong woman; she is now, and always has been, swayed by her daughter and the others about her. She is deeply in love with a man who is deeply in love with her, but is not quite sure that her duty does not lie with her insane husband. It is true that she married him in the fervid war days, when values were distorted; for sixteen years he has been in the insane asylum as a result of shell shock; but still she is not quite comfortable in taking up a new life without him. She is afraid her happiness is too good to last, and her indefinable trepidation communicates itself to us.

Her daughter, Sydney, is a different type. She is sharp and buoyant and modern; but in her there is a suggestion of the highly strung, over-sensitive temperament of the father who, even before his appearance, casts a sinister shadow over the household. Sydney, too, is engaged to be mar-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ried; and in her case also we have that curious sense that her happiness is too good to last.

Then Fairfield comes. He has been cured of his insanity and has escaped from the asylum and returned to his home. A grey shell of a man he is, sane, but still a quivering convalescent, seemingly trembling on the verge of madness.

In his eyes Margaret is still his wife. With his old nervous fervor he beseeches her to return to him—he pleads for his right to live. Her love for him is gone. She has given her love to another man—and she has the right to live. Vacillating still she is ready to forego her happiness; but in the end it is Sydney who makes the sacrifice after she learns that her father's madness was in reality inherited, and that she herself may have the taint in her blood.

When a play with a mission turns out to be such a superb play one always wonders whether the play was written to serve the mission or whether the mission was appropriated to serve the play. And we invariably suspect the latter.

Avery Hopwood began his career as a dramatist with a play about clothes. They are still his favorite theme. "The Demi-Virgin", the latest play to come from his hand, is mostly about clothes. For the greater part of the evening people are either taking off clothes, or being urged to do so or threatening to do so. One objection might be that they begin too early. Mr. Hopwood should realize that there must be a certain crescendo in his audacity. The shocks should be sparingly applied up to, say, ten o'clock. Otherwise they lose their power.

"Love Dreams" is an agreeably coherent little romance, set to agreeable tunes by Werner Jannsen, made to seem much more important than it is by the presence of the agreeable Tom Powers. Though someone should talk to this sterling young actor about keeping better company.

COBWEBS

By Jeannette Marks

MY thoughts are like cobwebs:
Sometimes my fingers are all feathered with them
And they play tanglefoot with death;
Sometimes they spread a canopy to dew and sun
Where love may find a home beneath their tented shade;
Again, they fling a line of silk,—
A lariat will noose the furthest star!
Sometimes my thoughts are bags of flaccid grey,
Traps for the joy that, glittering, drifts;
Again, they catch the wind of enterprise
And, bellying sails of dream, dart out to sea,
With coasts beyond the world for port!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Prose Poetry

NO matter how drab and unpleasant Sherwood Anderson's stories may seem on the surface, there seems to me to move underneath the simplicity of his sparse style, the poetry and the rhythm of souls struggling to express themselves. This curious ability to give voice to the tragedies of starved lives is his greatest achievement. He has never done it better than in "The Triumph of the Egg" (Huebsch). All of the stories are not successful. The short novel "Out of Nowhere into Nothing" I have never liked. Possibly it is simply because I'm incapable of understanding it. But such magnificent pieces of writing as "Brothers", "The Door of the Trap", and "The New Englander" are closer to the soul of the American peasant (the word is used for want of a better) than any writing done in this country except certain of the poems of Carl Sandburg. Whatever your prejudices for or against modern writing are, it seems to me that you must study Sherwood Anderson, even though you do not understand or approve him.

The Arrogant Young

ALICE DUER MILLER has the gift of writing lightly and keenly of light and keen people. Her Lydia of "Manslaughter" (Dodd, Mead) is as captivating as she is hateful: not a type, surely, but a portrayal of the most stimulating as well as the most disturbing characteristics of the modern American girl of wealth. Mrs. Miller only occasionally allows her excellent sense of plot to draw her away from smart dialogue and faithful characterization. We could wish that Lydia, convicted of manslaughter and broken in prison, had not, in the end, captured her hero. She would have been even more fascinating to me had she remained a villainess instead of becoming a heroine. However, as a study of American types and as entertaining reading, there are few better stories this fall.

Wine, Flowers, and Jade

THE colors and the spirit of translated Chinese lyrics so often catch the imagination and draw it out through a mist of beauty, that for me, at least, it is quite impossible to judge as to their actual merit as English verses. Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell in their "Fir-Flower Tablets" (Houghton Mifflin) seem to me, however, to have kept the level of their work higher than most translators. Miss Lowell has succeeded admirably in fusing her own style with that of the Chinese poets, so that while at no time she cries forth from these exquisite things, "I am Miss Lowell", yet they are obviously the work of a master technician and a poet who understands so well the subtle qualities of color tones and voice tones that she is especially qualified to reproduce the delicacies of oriental thought. All this has not said what a joy this carefully edited and annotated book of verses

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proves. There is wistfulness, passion, languor, and quiet humor.

When I have finished my poem,
I laugh aloud in my arrogance.
I rise to the Country of the Immortals which
lies in the middle of the sea.
If fame followed the ways of the good official,
If wealth and rank were long constant,
Then indeed might the water of the Han River
flow North-West.

Slowly these beautiful rhythms and quaint images drug you. Where, in so much of Miss Lowell's own verse, she wakes you with a crash of cymbals and a flash of scarlet banners, here she lets the oriental poets with their wagging heads take you on a lone drinking bout or into a blossom-filled mist. I know of few volumes where such a wealth of beauty can be found. One of the translations from Liang T'ung-shu, called "Calligraphy", might well stand as a review of her book:

CALLIGRAPHY

The writing of Li Po-hai
Is like the vermilion bird
And the blue-green dragon.
It drifts slowly as clouds drift;
It has the wide swiftness of wind.
Hidden within it lurk the dragon and the tiger.

The writing of Chia, the official,
Is like the high hat of ceremonial.
It flashes like flowers in the hair,
And its music is the trailing of robes
And the sweet tinkling of jade girdle-pendants.
Because of his distinguished position
He never says anything not sanctioned by precedent.

LIANG T'UNG-SHU, 18th Century

Books of the Sea

TO describe fully the delights of William McFee's collected essays would be simply to quote them all, and in full! "Harbours of Memory" (Doubleday, Page) contains most of his best pieces, though one or two things that he has done for THE BOOKMAN recently make us earnestly pray that there will be a new volume of essays in the spring or fall. Humor, colorful narrative, wise observation of books, calm views of life: all told with the tang of blown salt and the whistle of wind outside. Literature on the open sea—it is like lying in an open boat blown by auspicious winds and piloted by a silent and efficient helmsman, with a pillow at one's head and an apotheosis of the five-foot shelf at one's elbow. This is a book that few can quarrel over. The ingredients are of the first water and McFee has not failed in the mixing.

Nature Romances

AN extremely intelligent young Englishwoman who said that she did not care for novels, asked me not long ago if there was anyone in America who wrote like W. H. Hudson. "William Beebe, perhaps", I replied. "Oh!," said she, "the man who wrote the wonderful pheasant book!" How characteristic of the English that they should know this extraordinary scientific work of Beebe's and not his thoroughly delightful and readable essays. "Jungle Peace" was good indeed; but "Edge of the Jungle" is better. The magic of creating romance from the tiny event is Beebe's. He writes as few Americans can. There is fire, delicacy, poignancy in stories of flowers, butterflies, and forest sounds. He makes a poem of a butterfly's wing and a tragedy of the life of the ant. Such a book of travel essays has never been produced in America; and the best of it all is—he is a careful scientist. These are not fairy stories. They are true.

—*J. F.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Jessie B. Rittenhouse

EXAMINING the field of magazine verse, month after month, forces one to the conclusion that the old-line magazines need a vigorous rejuvenation, a blood-transfusion from some of their younger and more robust competitors. What, for instance, has happened to "The Atlantic", toward which poets have yearned, chiefly in vain, since the beginning of things in America? It grows more and more anæmic in its poetry, only now and then showing a flash of its old vitality. "The Century" is more alive and we have selected from its September issue "Lake Song" by Jean Starr Untermeyer, a lyric whose music and mood are admirably at one and which has its own haunting quality. Sara Teasdale has in the same issue "The Wise Woman", a keenly turned bit of psychology.

"Poetry" presents a group by Marya Zaturensky, the young Russian girl who has been but a few years in this country but who uses our tongue as sensitively as if born to it, while keeping her native moods and the touch that differentiates her. In most of her poems she draws upon Russian sources and so brings over into her work a certain strangeness, the charm of the unfamiliar, together with the passionate feeling of her race. These particular poems do not illustrate this side of her work but they show her in other phases. The second, "An Old Tale", has the quaintness of some bit of folk poetry.

And now we have "Tempo" and "Voices", two more magazines that offer their challenge to the sleepy gods. The first edited by Oliver Jenkins at Danvers, Massachusetts and the second by Harold Vinal at Boston. Both start promisingly, particularly "Voices", which has one of Hortense Flexner's strong and arresting sonnets and several other worth while things. One of the best offerings in "Tempo" is by Mr. Vinal who modestly keeps himself out of his own magazine.

For the last two years the brothers Simon and Jo Felshin have drawn the attention of those who attended the annual symposium of student-poets at Columbia, presided over by Professor Erskine. Simon, who graduated last year, is now in Paris whence we have just received his first book, "Free Forms", work whose feeling is so genuine that it would carry it irrespective of form but which has also its beauty. Jo Felshin who is, we believe, to graduate this year at the University, is already appearing here and there in the magazines. We take from "Contemporary Verse", "Creed", a homely affirmation of fundamental things.

LAKE SONG

The lapping of lake water
Is like the weeping of women,
The weeping of ancient women
Who grieved without rebellion.

The lake falls over the shore,
Like tears on their curven bosoms.
Here is languid, luxurious wailing.
The wailing of kings' daughters.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So do we ever cry,
A soft, unmutinous crying,
When we know ourselves each a princess
Locked fast within her tower.

The lapping of lake water
Is like the weeping of women,
The fertile tears of women
That water the dreams of men.

Jean Starr Untermeyer
—*The Century*

THE SPINNERS AT WILLOWSLEIGH

The old women sit at Willowsleigh. They spin,
And shriek and sing above the humming din.

They are so very old and brown and wise,
One is afraid to look them in the eyes.

Their bony fingers make a chilly sound,
Like dead bones shaking six feet underground!

Their toothless singing mocks—they seem to say:
"What I was yesterday you are today;

Stars kissed my eyes, the sunlight loved my brow—
You'll be tomorrow what I am now."

They dream and talk—they are so old and lean
And the whole world is young and fresh and green.

Once they were flowers, and flame, and living bread;
Now they are old and strange, and almost dead!

The old women spin at Willowsleigh; they fool
And scold, and sleep. Once they were beautiful.

Marya Zaturensky
—*Poetry*

AN OLD TALE

What shall we say of her,
Who went the path we knew of? She is dead—
What shall we say of her?

Men who are very old
Still speak of her. They say
That she was far too beautiful; they say
Her beauty wrought her ruin. But they
Are very old.

The old wives break their threads, they shake their heads.
They shake their heads when men will speak of her;
They say she was too beautiful.

I must not think of her, I must
Not speak of her! My mother says
One should not think of her.

She went the path we knew of; she is dead.
They say few knew her truly while she lived,
Though men will speak of her.

It really does not matter she is dead.
One need not think of her, although one night
Folks heard her weeping yet beside a pool,
One moonlit springtime I could swear she sang!
But she is dead—one must not think of her.

Marya Zaturensky
—*Poetry*

SEA URGE

I have a need of windy water breaking
Along the dunes and crying of the sea;
The touch of winds and day when it is waking
And quiet nights, these things are dear to me.
I have a need of wharfs and lonely piers
When spring comes back to flower in the town,
A need of bays and harbors and old weirs
And brooding hills above them, looking down.
They who have felt the wind upon their lips
And marked the tides that rise through golden noons
Must always dream of dim seas and tall ships
And boats at twilight on forgot lagoons.
Always they stand and watch upon a shore
For ghostly sails and masts that pass no more.

Harold Vinal
—*Tempo*

CREED

If I have Beauty to give, I shall give it simply,
As my mother gave me her breast, as my father taught me prayers.
If I have houses to build they shall be simple.
If I have stories to tell, answers to make,
I shall make them without flourishes, and with a simple heart.
I shall make friends with God,
And give my hand in token of peace to Death;
And have laughter and a friendly heart for men.
I shall accept the years as they steal up, with a faint smile to myself,
And greet Old Age quietly and with gladness,
As a wiser, kindlier friend than Youth.
And I shall live and die not needing hope or knowing fear.
If I have Beauty to give, I shall give it simply,
And be content with silence for an answer.

Jo Felshin
—*Contemporary Verse*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

YOUNG AND IN PARIS!

By Carl Van Doren

EIGHT or ten years ago American poetry began to look up. It discovered that verse to be sweet did not need forever to wear the mildew of Tennysonianism, or to be strong did not need to keep on forever blowing the very brazen bugle of Rudyard Kipling. It experimented, it aspired, it used its brains—and it was read. One knew that sooner or later the novelists would follow after. It looks now as if they were taking over the primacy of interest in native literature, if not the primacy of excellence. The year 1920 was a year to set down in the annals of the novel; so has 1921 been. And the second of these years has this importance: it shows signs of varying the single tone on which the revival of fiction began. Naturalism, it seems, is not to be the only school. Here is Donn Byrne letting his fancy run, in a very Celtic cloak, across the centuries and the continents with Marco Polo to love and win and lose Golden Bells, daughter of Kubla Khan. Here is Robert Nathan settling his imagination in a dainty village and delicately building up a story almost as full of sugar and spice as the nice little girls of the nursery rhyme. And here is Edward Alden Jewell blithely disregarding the war and the times and returning to the perennial theme of youth at play in Paris.

Youth with him plays very innocently, a reputable pension the scene of its activities and its hero Kenneth the amiable yet knowing boy who skylarks with the inflammable hearts of the middle-aged pensionnaires and in the end, instead of finding a sweetheart, finds a mother and takes a swim. As a whole the book is not so clear as it might have been made; part of the time it suggests the whimsical heroics of Leonard Merrick or of William J. Locke; and part of the time it suggests a parody of that romantic fiction in which plots are laid and detected, villains and adventuresses encouraged through many chapters and then properly labeled and punished in the final chapter. But "The Charmed Circle" suggests neither of these kinds too much. It is gay in its own way, clever in its own way, touching in its own way. The ancient Cassienda everlastingly nibbling at her turnips; Bromley the Voeuf with his entangled interests in the street cars of Athens and the fair sex of all lands; the so sensitive Mrs. Brathers, with her languors and her longings and her perturbations and her strong waters on the side; Cyprienne of the opera with her color schemes of saffron and silver-grey and sapphire blue, and her enchanting mystery; Kenneth himself, so demure at the Pension Bernard and yet so masterful in Montmartre—these and the various minor figures and their brisk careers, if they do not always fall into completely lucid pattern, yet in their own right are all amusingly seen and very deftly recorded.

What gives the book its highest quality, however, is the skill with which it has caught the color and perfume of Paris—of Paris as seen through the eye of the affectionate

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and remembered by them when all the more barbarous splendors of other cities fade from the recollection. As regards this Mr. Jewell is probably orthodox: believing, it may be hoped, that Paris is after all the most civilized community in the world, and therefore the most varied, the most intense, the most profitable for a sophomore like Kenneth to have his joyful fling in.

The Charmed Circle. By Edward Alden Jewell. Alfred A. Knopf.

HERE ARE LADIES!

By Marguerite Wilkinson

HERE are poets! Seldom does a season bring more interesting collections of verse by women. Books that must be mentioned briefly deserve consideration at length.

"The Contemplative Quarry" by Anna Wickham, ably introduced by Louis Untermeyer, should be read slowly and thoughtfully. It is a veritable poetic thunderstorm. It shows the lightning of a swift, vivid, uncertain modern intellect zigzagging from wrath to love and from scorn to faith. Many books are interesting because they move in straight lines, or at a tangent, toward individual solutions of life's problems. This book is interesting chiefly because it does not. To acclaim love and to doubt it, to defy man, as a feminist, and then to offer him the specious homage of precedence, to inveigh against the church and then to pray reverently to the Mater Dolorosa in one and the same book,—surely this is to offer a series of unusual contrasts in thought and emotion.

If we compare "Out of the Womb of Mother Sin" with "Mater Dolorosa", or "The Unremitting Weariness" with "The Wife's Song", or "Counsel of Arrogance" with "God, I Am Broken", we shall find a greater wavering than that of lyrical feeling changing from mood to mood. Anna Wickham has found no philosophical trail as yet, and has made none. She is a brave and honest explorer who gives a faithful and passionate record of impressions in terse and vigorous poetry. It is good to hear her say:

> God send a higher courage
> For to cut straight and clean!

Like Anna Wickham, Jean Starr Untermeyer adds her word to the explanation of womanhood.

> The lapping of lake water
> Is like the weeping of women,
> The fertile tears of women
> That water the dreams of men.

The lyrics in "Dreams Out of Darkness" surpass those in Mrs. Untermeyer's first book, "Growing Pains". She has grown. The growth is made evident in the sincere subjectivity of her new work, in the intensity of the new moods, in the freedom and subtlety of the new organic rhythms which she uses.

Several of the poems fall below the level of the rest of the collection, but it is not of these that I shall speak. Rather let me praise the feminine pathos of "Little Dirge", the keen truth of "The Old Tune", the hardihood of "To a War Poet", the grave excellence of "Lullaby to a Man-Child", and the fine insight of "The Altar". Most of all I wish to pay tribute to "The Passionate Sword", the noblest poem in the book and one which I shall not soon forget. This book strikes deep and reaches high. It has strong roots and brave branches.

If Hazel Hall lacks the aggressive valor of Anna Wickham and the fervent bravery of Jean Starr Unter-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meyer, she has, instead, the profound courage of a cloister. "Curtains" is a rarely beautiful book. In it I find a character as firm as granite and, occasionally, the accent of genius.

What does she know of life and what has she to give? She knows a room with grey walls, the "watchful corners of a ceiling", a brown window-sill and as much of the sky as can be seen through the window, thread, needles, and the texture of the cloth that she makes into cuffs for bishops and dresses for babes. But she gives a luminous beauty wrought out of her intimacy with these inanimate things, a spiritual radiance that is the result of a perfect assimilation of limited experience.

"Counterpanes", "Things That Grow", and all the lyrics in the section called "Needlework" are thoroughly original. No woman ever wrote who could find more meanings in sewing. It must suffice to quote "The Long Day":

I am sewing out my sorrow,
Like a thread, wearing it thin;
It will be old and frayed to-morrow.
Needle, turn out; needle, turn in.

Sorrow's thread is a long thread.
Needle, one stitch; needle, two.
And sorrow's thread is a strong thread,
But I will wear it through.

Then not only will sorrow
Be old and thin and frayed;
But I shall have, to-morrow
Something sorrow has made.

There is fortitude to be found, also, in Florence Kilpatrick Mixter's fluent sonnets gathered together under the title, "Out of Mist". The finest, I think, is "Sanctuary". "St. Patrick's Cathedral" and "All Soul's Eve" are good lyrics and there is merit in "Invocation".

Jeannette Marks is at her best when she writes brief and simple lyrics in conventional metres. The long poems in "Willow Pollen" are written in free verse that is colorful, inventive, and pleasantly fanciful, but "The Tide", "The Nest", "Two Candles", and "Wait Awhile" have more power over mind and heart. "Steps" is a miracle of condensation and "Repetends" is perfectly phrased. "Willow Pollen" is written without any affectation.

The same thing may be said of "The Lifted Cup" by Jessie B. Rittenhouse. The lyrics in this little grey volume are brief and scrupulously made. They have the precision of cameos. If we think that "The Dream", "Protest", and "One Star" have been too gently felt and written, we may say that they represent the low ebb of the book's excellence. We must admit that "Unsung", "The Wall", and "The Green Tree in Fall" are remarkable for clarity, grace, simplicity, and sincerity. At this high tide of its value the book reveals clean, fine feeling. Probably nothing in her first volume, "The Door of Dreams", was so good as the three short lyrics just mentioned.

Miss Rittenhouse's technique serves her purpose admirably. The short lines, the quick metres, the modest, inconspicuous rhyming are all appropriate to what she has to say. Her critical acumen makes it impossible for her to take out of the ink bottle those things which should be left in it. Sometimes she pleases us with a keen truth spoken casually, as in the last lines of "We Who Give Our Hearts in Spring":

We are caught into the flame
Where the golden fire runs,
All its ardor is the same
In the flesh or in the suns.

Here, in this book, are small fires, bright and warm, toward which those who value good taste may hold out their hands.

"Vigils", by Aline Kilmer, is well named. It tells the story of a wakeful

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spirit keeping watch over the spiritual treasure life has given, sometimes proudly, but sometimes, as in the title poem, with the exquisite humility of arrogance broken down. It is a much finer book than "Candles That Burn", Mrs. Kilmer's first offering, in which she gave us the simple, pleasing, domestic songs of a likable young mother.

In "Vigils" we find a new dignity and austerity. We find a sensitive intellect throwing light upon the shadows of suffering. If the suffering is not beautiful, the chiaroscuro is. Sometimes Mrs. Kilmer can claim a kinship with Christina Rossetti.

Technically, too, Mrs. Kilmer has grown. The rhythms of these new lyrics, shaken as they are by the realities that they express, are more moving than the placid and even tunes of her earlier poems. Even the occasional flippancies in which she indulges help to keep the poems strong and cool, certain and keen. "Atonement", "The Gardens", "The Night Cometh", and "Shards" have an astonishing depth of tragic sincerity. Only thirty short lyrics are to be found in the book, but every one of them is worth reading. Mrs. Kilmer does not force us to pay in hours what we owe in minutes.

I might quote one of the tragic lyrics in full, but at this season it seems wiser to choose the last stanza of the gay and charming "Song Against Children".

O the mistletoe bough, the mistletoe bough!
Could anyone touch it? I did not see how.
I hung it up high that it might last long,
I wreathed it with ribbons and hailed it with song.
But Christopher reached it, I do not know how,
And he ate all the berries off the mistletoe bough.

Truly, here are ladies, and poets! May Apollo give them all becoming garlands!

The Contemplative Quarry and The Man with a Hammer. By Anna Wickham. Harcourt, Brace and Co.
Dreams Out of Darkness. By Jean Starr Untermeyer. B. W. Huebsch.
Curtains. By Hazel Hall. John Lane Co.
Out of Mist. By Florence Kilpatrick Mixter. Boni and Liveright.
Willow Pollen. By Jeannette Marks. The Four Seas Co.
The Lifted Cup. By Jessie B. Rittenhouse. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Vigils. By Aline Kilmer. George H. Doran Company.

PAINT AND CIRCUSES

By Paul Rosenfeld

HARTLEY'S book assembles, among many dainty papers, some of the happiest essays on American art that have been written, those contributed several years since by Willard Huntington Wright to "The Forum" not excepted. One must go to "Adventures in the Arts" for the most brilliant vision of the ritual dances of the Indians, for the deepest understanding and justest appreciation of Ryder, Homer, Twachtman, Davies, Marin, O'Keeffe, Fuller, Robinson, and Martin, recorded in prose. For the author is one of those men like Blake and Whistler, born both for painting and for literature. If color is this New Englander's major medium, poetry and prose find him a minor material no less grateful. The self-same glimmer of genius that makes his pigment to vibrate, and carries his dark luscious still-lives, his regal and diabolic lilies, his rubber-plants catatonic and autumnal, over the border-line of things into the fluid electric ether of art, is present too in the handsome incrustations of his cold splendid poetry, in the colored, clever, and star-dusty passages of the best of his essays. Stemming as a proseman, one would say, from Pater, Francis Thompson, and Henry James, fellow

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Parnassians; continuing to paint the lily, to stroke dowager velvets and satins, to hammer on the gold of æsthetic phraseology, he has nevertheless succeeded in developing a personal profile of style.

Where he has really wrought, Hartley has made the rather opulent language of his predecessors more simple, more slight, more fluffily iridescent. Subject-matter has been lightened, made less Parnassian and inherently brave, more racy and naive. Hartley has striven to make his writing a superior sort of talk, part of a seriously developed æsthetic of a spirit exquisitely temperate and urbane. Doubtless, he would be pleased to give his readers the sensation of having shared in the best of the conversation; of having met him on Fifth Avenue with swagger-stick, gardenia, and Scotch shawl, in a fair mood produced, say, by the news that he had been elected corresponding member of the international society of dadas; of having strolled with him, looked into shop windows, visited a gallery or two, taken in a turn at a vaudeville house, stepped into a circus dressing room while commenting epigrammatically on some of the problems present to the modern artist. And in the most glistening bits of his essays on modern painting, on acrobatics, on acting, on the poetry of the 'nineties, on New England précieux, on photography, on dadaism, we are brought face to face with the identical elegant, distinguished, weary Hartley demonstrated by the heavy figs, pomegranates, lustrous bananas of his paintings; by large spaces of royal purple and cold dandified blue, by butter-gold yellows bruised with Greco shadow-blacks, by thick creamy whites and reds like madly thumping drums, by rhythms like those of tumblers and trapeze swingers and circus clowns.

For whether he be writing on Redon, worshiper "of the lip of the flower, of dust upon the moth wing, of the throat of the young girl or the brow of the young boy", or of a vaudeville gymnast who "gives you chiefly the impression of a dragon-fly blown in the wind of a brisk morning over cool stretches of water"; whether stating that Emily Dickinson "wears with one as would an old-fashioned pearl set in gold and dark enamels", that Henry James "is surely, in all his elaborateness, trying to square the rose and compute the lily, algebraical advances upon a most simple thesis", or that "the stage...is a place for the laughter of the senses, the laughter of the body: a place for the tumbling blocks of the brain to fall in heaps"; we perceive the distraught Brummel among the American moderns, seeking to drown himself in a sea of handsome color and animal grace, that the restless ticking of his rationalizing New England brain cease an instant, that the rock in his Puritan heart shatter. Here, too, the elongated person with the Pied Piper eyes and Emersonian proboscis who very probably dreams of living a sort of Heliogabalus, amid porphyry, purple, and gold, of wearing heavy robes of the Tyrian dye, and strolling languorously down galleries attended by a horde of servants carrying things, tries to transcend the arid empty space about him by playing with bits of bright silk, curious toys, heavy and fantastic flower-cups. Grace and charm and peacock-like magnificence hide and yet betray utter fatigue with never having really lived. Author and audience are in tacit conspiracy to fix their minds on some jolly and curious fragment of physical unthinking life, on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"minstrels of muscular melody", on girls who play ivory and silver diamond-studded accordions, on "the brilliant excitation of the moment", that the immanence of death and corruption be forgotten.

Hence, Hartley at the buffalo dance of the Tesuque pueblo, or before the canvas of some older or modern American, or before a photograph by Stieglitz or Sheeler, is a personality, a developed, often brilliant, always sensitive artist mobilized for American criticism. Himself a modern painter, erecting the expression of his own blood and character on the base furnished by the creation of Cézanne, highly perceptive, versed in reading the sensuous cipher of painting, he translates into life again as directly through literature as through pigment the impulses received from the work of his forerunners and contemporaries. Where the impressions of so many other painters and critics remain, for want of strictly literary power, in a sort of limbo this side of reality, Hartley's are automatically fleshed in a crisp verbal image, a passage of appropriately tinted prose, appear as poetry. Either too indifferent or too subtle, one scarcely knows which, to be much besides an impressionist, he scarcely ever fails to seize, in the painters with whose work he has lived, the quality of life they communicate, the substance without sense of which all technical analysis is vain. One might long scrutinize the color-language of O'Keeffe, for instance, without arriving at anything nicer than Hartley's:

> Georgia O'Keeffe has had her feet scorched in the laval effusiveness of terrible experience; she has walked on fire and listened to the hissing of vapors around her person. . . . She looks as if she had ridden the millions of miles of her every known imaginary horizon, and has left all her horses lying dead in the tracks. . . . She wears no poison emeralds. She wears too much white: she is impaled with a white consciousness.

Has ever anyone more neatly recreated the charm of Arthur B. Davies than it is recreated in these sentences:

> He [Davies] is the highly sensitized illustrator appointed by the states of his soul to picture forth the pauses of the journey through the realm of fancy. It has in it the passion of violet and silver dreaming, the hue of an endless dawn before the day descends upon the world. You expect the lute to regain its jaded tune there. You expect the harp to reverberate once again with the old fervors. You expect the syrinx to unfold the story of the reed in light song. It contains the history of all the hushed horizons that can be found over the edges of a world of materiality. It holds in it always the warm soul of every digit of the moon.

Or the character of Winslow Homer in the essay called by his name? Or that of Redon, or Twachtman, or poor Rex Slinkard, or of half a dozen other painters discussed by this artist?

Like painter, like critic. If Hartley the essayist, whether he be discussing paint or circuses, exhibits some of the same magic glimmer that passes into the opaque color brushed by Hartley, his work is limited by some of the same shortcomings that limit the beauty of the surfaces rubbed by the painter. Some want of nervous stamina, perhaps, keeps the man from fully developing the greater portion of his canvases to a completely satisfactory degree. Oftentimes, one finds one's self demanding a greater degree of tumescence than he has brought to his painting. He breaks off, becomes wearied with his conceptions, too soon. The man himself is always flitting from flower to flower, from lily to fruit, from still-life to mountain landscape, from Maine to New Mexico, from New York to Paris or Berlin. His pigment reveals the vagabond libido. Something of genius he always records, some noble distinction, but only seldomly the whole fine presence of fully developed artistry. A

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

similar source of irritation is to be found at instants in the greater number of essays, on painting and circuses both, collected in Hartley's book. The organization of his material is not always athletic and hard. Even as fine a piece of writing as the chapter on the Red Man, with its relation of Indian dancer to modern artist, wanders slightly. Other pieces annoy with a too great plentifulness of bare, unsupported statement. Where one wants definitions, developments, approfundizations, one is oftentimes dismissed with an airy wave of the hand, an epigram, a cleverness. But, after all, it is useless to cry over unspilled milk. There is sufficient rich wet in both Hartley the painter and the proseman to give us plenty of cause for spending our time in rejoicing. For, after all, the painter is one of the most significant personalities in the contemporary situation in art. Here, at last, in the ranks of American art, is a creature whom the world delights; a craftsman civilized sufficiently to have his own perception of things. Hartley the proseman with all his shortcomings, remains one of the truest and most poetic critics of American painting, one of the very rare, fanciful, and dainty essayists of the time. We would be much poorer without the iridescences of either.

Adventures in the Arts. By Marsden Hartley. Boni and Liveright.

ROUND AND ABOUT SOUTH AMERICA

By Frederick O'Brien

NO American traveler who writes books is better outfitted in experience, languages, keenness of observation, and disregard of dangers and hardships, than Harry A. Franck. In "Working North from Patagonia" he covers in more than 600 pages of text and 176 photographs almost the entire sweep of South America from north to south, and gives a rounded view of nearly a dozen countries, their peoples, lands, customs, economics, and politics. I doubt if anyone has so completely described the varied aspects of South America in a volume as has Franck. In a previous book, "Vagabonding Down the Andes", he has written of all of the lower America not covered in this one.

Franck is informative, critical, and always interesting. With a vast fund of comparisons from many parts of the world, he interprets what he sees in instructive and often fascinating passages. But he is an incurable moralist and devotee of efficiency. He sees sloth, sin, and stupidity in most of the human beings of all South America, and only in the abundance and beauty of nature does he find nepenthe for the faults of the multicolored races of the hot regions below the Caribbean Sea. Franck is not a romanticist nor a humorist, and one must not look for the excusing graces in his book. There are other and strong qualities which, doubtless, would suffer beside them.

Franck walked and worked much of the way he leads us. He saw the life of the cities and the fields, the pampas and the palaces, the factories and the bagnios. In this book as in his others, he surpasses as a commentator upon outlandish things because he stays near the ground, dwells among the majorities, views the entirety of the social structure, and not—as with most travelers—merely the obvious and entertaining. And, it must be stressed again, Franck understood intimately the talk of the thousands he conversed with, could follow the gossip

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of street and shop, of train and boat, and thus learn the spirit of the people. He is no amateur wandering among strange sights, but a seasoned adventurer sizing up civilizations, and apportioning credit and debit with a trained and fearless hand. He has no pride of position in his lodgments but sleeps anywhere he may, and often with vagabonds, Indians, or even cattle. He knows the history and statistics of his countries, and intermingles them with incidents and bizarre habits.

Franck found in French Guiana the worst of French colonial government, and French officialdom abroad is only less inept and cruel than the Portuguese. Franck's description of the convict system of Cayenne is harrowing,—death, torture, and filth on every side. The chapter glows with indignation at the horrors of the scene.

One cannot encompass the huge area of "Working North from Patagonia" in a page or two. It is a book for leisurely reading, filled with acute revelations of the inside of the nations visited, with no padding and no bathos, and wanting only less *hundred per cent Americanism*, less opposition to Africanism, and more toleration for the fops and lights o' love of the cities, for the grafting priests and the mad pursuit of pleasure, to be just what we ask in travelogue. On the mechanical side, the volume is well printed and bound.

Working North from Patagonia. By Harry A. Franck. The Century Co.

BABIES AND BASEBALL

By Alexander Woollcott

IN reviewing any book I admire and enjoy so hugely as I do this "Seeing Things at Night", which has been made by pitching together a lot of stray leaves from the writings of the inexhaustible and immeasurable Heywood Broun, it requires a continuous self-repression to keep from cheering so loudly that the reader will say, "This fellow doth protest too much". Yet if one is to be temperate and chill in reporting on such a treasure chest of wisdom and fun and beauty, the mere announcement of an average book's publication would, on the same scale, be an excessive attention.

It might be simpler just to say that a rereading of these fugitive papers of his foreshadows (even if it does not establish) him as an American peer of Chesterton and Barrie. At least there are nuggets of their gold in the vein he has struck. But mentioning them in the same breath with him invokes an awkward comparison, for while he has his fleeting resemblances to both, he is more like Milne than either and is really like no one in the world. There is, to be sure, a dash of the genial and sheepish Will Rogers.

Perhaps some ground could be gained by boldly proclaiming him the most delightful American essayist since Charles Dudley Warner; but I am inclined to think E. S. Martin is that and anyway, if you were to read only the essays in this, the book of Broun's heart, you would miss the richest and most beguiling things in it. You would miss three or four enchanting fantasies, such as that short story, at once frolicsome and profound, which he has called "The Fifty-first Dragon". And you would miss "Inasmuch", one of the best Christmas stories I know. It is one which Mr. Dickens would have relished and which Kate Douglas Wiggin should read aloud around the fire come Michaelmas.

Someone is always shaking his head

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and lamenting that so whimsical and errant a fancy as Heywood Broun's should be tethered to the daily stake of literary and dramatic criticism, declaring it a pity that he should not be free to write anything which comes into his ruminant head. Which complaint is wildly absurd, because that is precisely what Broun does do. Under the title of "The New Play" or "Books" he has written blandly away about babies and baseball, war and women, parsons and pugilists. You pick up what guilefully purports to be a review of such a book, say, as "The Ways of the Circus" and soon find yourself following along so characteristic a bypath as this:

> Perhaps it is not quite fair to go on as if lions were the only living creatures in all the world who are swayed and cowed by firmness and authority. The same weakness may be found now and then among men. All too many of us if hit on the nose with iron bars, either real ones or symbols, do little more than lions in similar circumstances. We may growl and roar a little, but we do not show resentment in any efficient way. And like the lions, we are singularly stupid in not making working alliances with our fellows against the man with the iron bar. By and by we begin to go through the hoops as if the procedure were inevitable. Having made a protest we feel that our duty is done.

Broun really meets the specifications which the great Mr. Mencken gives as those of the only kind of critic worth reading—the kind who, on picking up a new biography of Roosevelt, say, will glance through it and then dash off his own views on Roosevelt. Broun is the kind that picks up a new biography on Roosevelt, reads forty pages into it and then, by way of comment, writes a captivating piece about whisky, Joan of Arc, and airedale terriers. He, surely, is no pernickety chaperone of the belles of belles lettres. He has to be watched himself.

"Seeing Things at Night" is such a capital title for a volume of dramatic criticism that it seems a pity it was used for a book which is anything but that. Considering how many plays Broun has docilely attended, there is suprisingly little about plays and players in it. Even the chapter called "Spanking Manners" proves, on inspection, to be no review of a Laurette Taylor production but an engaging piece on the beating of babies.

What we have here, then, is a book as miscellaneous as a diary or a scrap basket, yet as personal as a tooth brush. It has Broun, himself, as its unity—for all the books and plays and people that pass through his fey mind come out recognizably colored and encrusted. It's the sauce that determines this pudding. And it has another unity—the unity of an unflagging hostility against all bigotry, the world around. You might call the book "The Rise of Heywood Broun", a story of adventure, with Dr. John Roach Straton as the villain and H 3d as the leading juvenile. There are, of course, other characters—among them a repellent fellow to whom are attributed several boorish and objectionable remarks. He is identified only as A. W.

The collection contains most of his best work and not much of the inferior stuff into which he occasionally flounders. One notes with regret the omission of some of his briefer masterpieces. There was, for instance, his review of the first play produced by Butler Davenport at his own little theatre in East Twenty-seventh Street, New York. It was a dirty little play. Broun lifted one shaggy paw and struck it down with a single sentence. "Someone should spank young Mr. Davenport", he said, "and take away his piece of chalk."

I miss, too, the Geoffrey Stein suite. Mr. Stein appeared in 1917 in Wedekind's study of morbid adolescence,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Frühlingserwachen", which Broun translated neatly enough as "The Spring Offensive". He gave it as his opinion that Mr. Stein's performance was the worst he had ever seen on any stage, or words to that effect. Mr. Stein brought suit for libel, which was thrown out of court on the grounds that a dramatic critic's opinions did not have to be intelligent. They merely had to be his own. The next time Broun had occasion to review a performance by the mooted Stein, he was ever so gentle. He merely said that Stein's performance wasn't up to his usual standard.

It does seem to me that room for that diverting episode should be made in the next edition of "Seeing Things at Night". It might be managed by cutting out Broun's pun based on the startling similarity between the words *carnal* and *Cornell.*

Seeing Things at Night. By Heywood Broun. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

CAN A WIFE WRITE HER HUSBAND'S BIOGRAPHY?

By Sydney Greenbie

DEAN CROSS of Yale says she can't, at least not at this stage of man's self-consciousness. "The relation between husband and wife is so intimate," he argues in the last "Yale Review", "that it is hazardous for either to write the biography of the other....Sometime, no doubt, the existing restraint will be removed from their pens, and then we shall have some entertaining biographies." I think that Charmian London has broken through those restraints in "The Book of Jack London". It seems that five years of widowhood have in no way lessened the strain of her grief, nor have they minimized the ardor of her great love and devotion. And she does not hesitate to give us every fraction of her worship. But it is also certain that few wives would at the same time have laid bare the past of their husbands with the honesty, lack of false modesty, and departure from the conventional that Charmian London evinces. Nor is she playing up to people "who delight in picturesque crime", though she tells us that another Dean, Dean of American Letters, said that "Jack London was a self-confessed felon, and ought to be behind the bars today". There is nothing in her life of Jack that smacks of "good influence" and "conversion", not even as much as Jack himself confessed to in "Martin Eden" and "John Barleycorn". Jack did not become a "good" man. What Charmian London sets out to do is to show up a man who emerged from the worst type of American social conditions into a generous and noble creature simply because these qualities were always latent in the man. And she shows that even to the last day of his life Jack had to struggle against the currents of life which sought to bear him back again downstream. She is portraying, in a sense, not her individual husband but the America or the social consciousness of America which aims to give the underdog a chance. And to me she has given an accurate picture of the Jack London I was fortunate enough to know.

I have always believed that the coming and going of a really great man in the world is unaccompanied by any bluster. If there is blare of trumpet it is not of his making, but of the mob's. If of his making, he is not a great man. No one of the few great men I have known convinced me more of this than Jack London.

I had been late in making my reser-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vation for a plate at a dinner given to Jack some years ago and was in consequence placed in a corner near the door. Jack was late. As he appeared in the doorway, I said to my companion, "There he is", and looked up into his bright, smiling face. There must have been something in my look that spoke to Jack, for he put out his hand to me—a total stranger—warmly, and passed on to his seat at the other end of the room. And in that moment I felt that I knew Jack London.

A few years after that I was in San Francisco and called up Glen Ellen by phone. Jack's sister, Eliza, answered. I wanted to come out to the ranch. Without consulting Jack, she told me what train to take and that I would be met at the station. Others also drifted in as casually, and from the moment of my arrival I enjoyed a hospitality such as I have seldom known elsewhere. Thenceforward I thought I really knew Jack London. But now that I have read "The Book" I am sure I do.

"The Book of Jack London" will scandalize a good many. It is too much of a rib of its Adam not to do so. Charmian London did not march shoulder to shoulder with Jack for over ten years without becoming thoroughly embued with his spirit. But there will be enough of those of us who stand bareheaded before man to make her story of Jack London more than worth while. It is regrettable that, carried along by her ardor and her grief, Mrs. London should have been so unfortunate in much of her phrasing. Intensely eager to convey that which was hers through an exceptional and wondrous relationship, she seems to struggle for expression and, often unable to get exactly the word she is after, she permits herself to coin new words and new combinations of words, when all along the simpler word lies there at hand. One cannot find justification for *bepuzzlement, funning, unveracity, startlement,* and a tendency to hold back the reader's interest by verbosity. One regrets that, having drawn such a vivid portrait of her husband, she has not equally developed the dramatic possibilities in the men and women who affected his life and thought. Cloudsley Johns, for instance, evidently one of Jack's closest and most enduring friends, might just as well have been an inscription on the wall. I still don't know who he is and what he did.

But withal, those of us who knew Jack London ever so slightly feel that in her book Charmian London has given us a life-sized portrait of the man. More than that, as his wife she has held herself up to him as the mirror for his personality; and in her love, her devotion, her understanding, we see Jack London as it would have been impossible for us to see him through any other medium. "The Book of Jack London" will be an inexhaustible source for other studies of Jack London that may come.

The Book of Jack London. By Charmian London. Two volumes. The Century Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A GROUP OF BOOKS WORTH READING

By Heywood Broun

EDNA FERBER'S new novel "The Girls" (Doubleday, Page) represents a triumph of feeling over form. Miss Ferber has chosen as a plot scheme the tricky and troublesome formula of three generations. The device compels her to reproduce life again and once more in practically the same terms. Existence has, to be sure, its rhythms and its repetitions, but they seldom fall into patterns exact enough to suit the convenience of the novelist. Without attempting a definition, form ought to be something which sits as easily upon a writer as an old hat. Indeed there are times when it is eminently proper to doff it altogether. These are the moments in which Miss Ferber excels. Only let her go bareheaded and there is every evidence that breezes are blowing. The stiff plan of her story is forgotten once she begins to let her characters shift for themselves without regard to arriving at any definite point at a given time. There is emotion in "The Girls" and with it a persuasive clearheadedness. It is eloquent in its appeal for the right which the new generation seems to insist upon before all others —the right to be wrong. The book follows the development of a female line from its place in the home out to sunlight. Before we are done we know the chief figures of the novel intimately. Some of the minor sketches are meagre. Miss Ferber has not quite forgotten that she is a writer of short stories and she is inclined to be satisfied at times with fast blocking in of two-dimensional folk. She tries occasionally to make a sentence or so do the work of a paragraph. She relies on these occasions on what F. P. A. has called "complete characterizers". Man with all his subtleties is no fit subject for such easy definition. Miss Ferber is fine enough to take her time, and when she does "The Girls" seems among the most vigorous pieces of work done recently by any of the young Americans.

Apparently the war is still too much a part of life to be accepted unqualifiedly as a field for literature. It is so much easier to cry "Pro German" and "Bolshevist" than to discuss art forms, that "Three Soldiers" (Doran), this novel of the reaction of certain characters to the A. E. F., has not received much consideration without taint of political and economic feeling. There are those who think that John Dos Passos ought to be sent to jail and others who hail him as the first of native authors to tell the truth about the war. We are not disposed to class the book either among lamentations or revelations. It does not seem to us a book which may fairly be accepted as a starting point for generalizations about the army. It was not written to be read by a Congressional Committee or anything like that. "Prove it," some few critics have asked, which seems to us just about as ridiculous as if the reviewers of another day had greeted "Tom Jones" with cries of "Add it up" or had demanded of Zola that he demonstrate the square root of "La Terre". Mathematics ought not to enter into the consideration of "Three Soldiers" any more than politics. It is not important whether there were ten men in the army like Andrews or ten thousand. We feel sure that there must have been at least one, which is ample for the purpose of any artist. Nothing which has come out of the school of American realists has seemed to us so entirely honest. There is not an atom of pose in the book. It represents deep convictions and impressions eloquently expressed. Indeed the eloquence sometimes carries the writer a little beyond the province of realism. There is at times a little more lyricism than is quite compatible with life in the army or elsewhere. Yet it is captious to deplore the occasional imaginative excesses, since nothing but imagination has enabled Dos Passos to reduce so vast and diffuse a thing as the American invading army into a definite personality. The army is the chief figure in the story. When the novelist asks us to meet and regard it there may be many who will object that an old friend has changed beyond recognition.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That does not matter beside the fact that Dos Passos has brought the millions into such definite shape that we are enabled to get close enough to the huge affair to look squarely into its eyes.

Generally speaking, a new novelist must crawl before he walks. Stephen Vincent Benét in "The Beginning of Wisdom" (Holt) experiments with some of the elementary means of locomotion but then he makes a sudden leap and begins to dance. And his dancing days seem to us much the best things in his book. As an ironist we find him a little self-conscious and plodding, but once he gets to the chapters concerning Philip and Milly he writes with extraordinary ease and beauty. This interlude which summons more emotion than anything else in the book is, curiously enough, the most graceful portion of the novel as well. Once the young Yale student has fallen in love, Benét is willing to cease his somewhat prying analysis and let the boy have his fling. The episode is delightful throughout. Milly, who said it with fox trots, is one of the most appealing heroines we have met in a year among the books. It is rather a pity that Benét felt it necessary to let her die so early in his tale. He has nothing else quite so interesting to offer. The story of the adventures of Philip during the deportation of the I. W. W.'s is interesting, however, and seems to have been derived from first-hand observation. The moving picture incidents on the other hand seem echoes of somebody else. We have no means of knowing whether the California film camps are within the scope of the author's experience, but he manages to make them merely places in a novel. Benét may be identified as a disciple of F. Scott Fitzgerald but it is more than probable that he will go further. The intense gloom of premature pessimism seems more of an attitude than a genuine point of view in the case of this young novelist. He can live it down,—indeed he does. He poses only when he remembers to do so and he shows that he has the ability to lose himself in a character. It does not avail a man to gain the whole world of technical proficiency unless he can abandon at some point or other all interest in his own soul in his enthusiasm for that of somebody else.

It would seem as if an author might justly assume that the study of life should be simplified by taking just a little slice of it. This is the assumption which Constance I. Smith has made in her striking novel, a first one we understand, called "Ten Hours" (Harcourt, Brace). The theory that one may jump into a foot of life and thereby avoid the danger and trouble of going all the way down to the bottom is not altogether sound. The shorter the interval of time the more prodigious must be the writer's capacity for seeing and understanding. "Ten Hours" is often thrilling and again and again convincing in its story of one extraordinary day in the life of a middle class Englishwoman. There is one stunning dramatic situation in which the woman has to make up her mind within a few minutes to stay or to go. The door which Nora opened at the suggestion of Ibsen beckons her enticingly. Suspense is admirably arranged. Then Celia decides. Her choice does not matter to us here in any such brief criticism. But the scene matters and it seems to us that Miss Smith has handled it rather too much in the fashion of a dramatist. It has been allowed to become the big scene, which is a condition marring to the best interests of a novel. The one scene overtops the rest of the story. The author has been a little impatient to reach it and has accordingly skimped the rest of her story a little. We do not hear or learn all the things which ought to belong to us after a crowded ten hours. This is a book of promise in which performance is by no means inconsiderable, but the author is not yet sufficiently sure of people to subject them to the exacting test of the close-up.

Booth Tarkington seems to us to lead almost every other American in technical finish. His facility is so great that he has been known to trade upon it. There was a time when he was in danger of establishing himself as just a funny man. That passed beyond recall with "Alice Adams" (Doubleday, Page). No more poignant tragedy has been written in the year. We could even count back quite a way, but already we have deplored the existence of the statistical in literature. Moreover, we have only ten fingers. The tragic method of "Alice Adams" sways us utterly because it is a tragedy in which nobody dies, nobody goes mad, nobody commits suicide. Indeed the people who go down are still fighting at the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

end and that is characteristic of man in the face of adversity. They dream even after disaster. The study of Alice herself is masterly in its insight and the picture of her father is just as good. Ironically enough, it has been said that Booth Tarkington did not like "Main Street" and planned "Alice Adams" as an answer. To be sure he has bettered the contentions of Sinclair Lewis but nothing has been offered in rebuttal. The dinner on the hot night completes one of the most devastating pictures of American life which has ever been drawn. And incidentally no living writer can do more with temperature than Tarkington. F. Scott Fitzgerald in a short story called "The Ice Palace" made us feel almost as cold as we ever feared to be, but Tarkington cannot be matched for bringing home humidity. "Alice Adams" is a book to move the heart and wilt the collar.

The most striking and characteristic thing about Rose Macaulay to our mind is her ability to laugh at things and still preserve them safe from ridicule in the land of desire. "Dangerous Ages" (Boni and Liveright) is mostly about the young feminists whom the world has nursed in its bosom. Miss Macaulay understands keenly the points at which satire may be directed against them. She mocks at their deadly seriousness but as she mocks she marches along shoulder to shoulder. Here is the most persuasive propaganda in the world for feminism. Generally speaking, the man who smiles is immediately thrown out of any forward looking group, but now we may all follow the example of Rose Macaulay and ride along in the band wagon even though we do not obligate ourself to join in every cheer down to the ninth and last long rah. Unlike "Potterism" the new novel is but slightly concerned with plot. Miss Macaulay knows now that she can talk her way through and she does. It is almost the best talk in the world and no story is required. The weakness of the book, as in the other, is the fact that the people are just a shade too brilliant to be real. They live in a world in which there are no dishes to be washed.

Harvey Fergusson has accomplished a capital first novel in "The Blood of the Conquerors" (Knopf) by the comparatively simple process of keeping his eyes open. This is a book which owes its appeal neither to people nor to talk, but rather to land. Mr. Fergusson not only goes back to the soil but he burrows into it. Like the vagrant sculptors of Atlantic City he chooses for his medium sand. After reading the book it is difficult to resist a temptation to step aboard the first train for New Mexico. As one who has passed through that huge territory, which seems to have been devised as a hazard for some cosmic golf course, we can testify that the virtues which Fergusson sees do not leap up at the eye. He has been satisfied with no casual glance. He has wooed the countryside and by and by it has told him its secrets. We do not mean to suggest that the book reads like a travel agent's prospectus. There is vivid description of the conflict of American and Spanish civilization. The hero comes from the old stock. He is admirably realized and understood by Fergusson. Unfortunately the author has not been able to get nearly so well acquainted with his heroine. She remains a lay figure, a lost doll in the middle of the desert.

"Privilege" by Michael Sadleir (Putnam) mystifies us somewhat. Its point of view and its conception of just what is important in the world coincides rather closely with that of "the Duchess". There is a somewhat similar wagging of the head over the scandals in the big house and the goings on of his lordship. Mr. Sadleir boasts in his introduction that true talk has not for an instant been within his intent. He wants more of a gesture than life can afford. The thing which puzzles us is that although all this is repugnant to us, the story is amazingly interesting. Sadleir can afford to venture into the grand manner without fear of ridicule because he does it magnificently. Perhaps we shall be compelled to say against our inclination that "Privilege" is a good book, but we shall not hesitate to qualify that by adding—and a stunt.

May Sinclair's "Mr. Waddington of Wyck" (Macmillan) is perhaps the finest study of a windbag known to literature. No pretender has ever been punctured so cleverly; and yet so great is the art of Miss Sinclair that she presents her fearful bore

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

convincingly without once letting the reader get fully into his clutches. You feel just as safe as if he were a caged lion within heavy bars. All the fun is yours and none of the danger.

Readers who remember A. S. M. Hutchinson as the author of "Once Aboard the Lugger" will hardly recognize him in his most recent novel "If Winter Comes" (Little, Brown). This is a new man, but he is again delightful. Almost all the larky spirit is gone. There are pranks but they are not quite lighthearted. Indeed the book is almost the tragedy of a whimsical man in a world far too matter of fact for his fancies. Only the ultimate heroine and, we trust, the reader understand him. "If Winter Comes" is fully as humorous as "Once Aboard the Lugger", but this is a deeper current with less splashing. The most conspicuous gain is in feeling. The book chimes all the hours. Few novelists have ever succeeded in knowing and in loving a character as Hutchinson has loved Mark Sabre. The book is not a great novel because the author does not possess sufficient understanding to go all the way round. He has not breath enough to animate the rest after making Mark Sabre live. Mabel, Mark's wife, is carefully observed and seems a person as far as all surface indications go. All the reportorial work about her is excellent. She is a convincing scold, but Hutchinson does not know and does not tell just why the clash between her and Mark was inevitable. There must be something to be said for her point of view, but it is not said. The opening of the book is brilliant. It is as graceful a piece of writing as we have seen in a season. Indeed Hutchinson throughout keeps for himself a high place among the stylists. It seems to us that invention slackens a little toward the end. The story of Sabre's most dire time of trouble is not altogether convincing. Too many things happen to him in too short a time. He becomes at these times a little less a real person than a direct descendant of Job. One feels that the creator, or the novelist, or somebody in authority has set out to tantalize him. In such case he becomes not of the ordinary sort but a person set apart. As such we lose intimacy with him which is not regained until the time of tribulation ends with a turn toward happiness which savors a little of repentance just as the earlier misfortunes seemed to us to represent revenge.

The modern American novel has so consistently given itself to realism for the last two years that it was not only desirable but inevitable that somebody should speak up for romance. This might have been a person who burned or somebody cool and shrewd who calculated. It seems to us that Donn Byrne detected an opening in the literary field and that he has dashed through it much as a Harvard halfback might dart through the Yale line. Once through he makes a pretty run, but the play is less the result of inspiration than good coaching. Donn Byrne seems to us consciously and determinedly romantic in "Messer Marco Polo" (Century). He has done an excellent job and actually achieved beauty in this rapidly moving story of the Venetian who went to China, but except in rare instances the job is not so good but that one can detect Mr. Byrne in the act of straining every muscle. It is not a book quite calculated to put your heart in your mouth because there is a temptation to emulate the author and keep your tongue in your cheek.

Owen Johnson has managed to get some first-rate talk into "The Wasted Generation" (Little, Brown). For a time he approaches the true problems of the day in fictional manner. This approach is interesting in itself and seems to promise more, but eventually the reader discovers that the intellectual front of the novel is merely intended to conceal a far different sort of business in the rear. To us the major portion of the book seems a melodramatic and conventional war novel. We had hoped for something more because of the auspicious beginning but we fear that Mr. Johnson has created a literary blind tiger. He has made a gesture of something different but before he is done his vast public is regaling itself once again with the stuff which inebriates but does not cheer.

Once to every Englishman comes the urge to write a novel about "the black country" and the blasted fields around the pit heads of the coal mines. No English author, to the best of my knowledge, has ever resisted and accordingly the total of "black coun-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

try'' novels is large; but ''The Black Diamond'' by Francis Brett Young (Dutton) is an exceedingly good one. It treats of youth and sex and such things without becoming either painstaking or lyrical. Besides, the reader who is not interested in sex, or has read about it somewhere before, can console himself with the fights. Two of the best brawls which we know of in the modern English novel are included in ''The Black Diamond''. There are some rousing chapters about football as well. As in all novels of English mining towns certain compulsory incidents are included. There is the inevitable accident and the equally inevitable moment when the burly miner comes home intoxicated and beats his wife. But some of it is much newer than this and almost all of it is capitally conceived and written.

Word of mouth information about the folk at Washington is generally much more valuable and interesting than that which is printed. Edward G. Lowry has taken note of the small and intimate details concerning our public men and has put them into print in ''Washington Close-Ups'' (Houghton Mifflin). They remain as lively as anecdotes. It is pleasant to know that Hiram Johnson is ''perhaps the most inveterate movie fan in America''. This fact explains many things in the political career of the gentleman. We are also thrilled to find out that Frank Hitchcock ''never sweats'', but it is a little more difficult to read international significance into this. Our only complaint about Mr. Lowry's book is that he is much too kind. Again and again he diverts himself from saying that some great figure or other has no intelligence and confines his comment instead to the excellent disposition of his subject.

The anonymous author of ''The Mirrors of Washington'' (Putnam) has been less mindful of people's feelings. He is not so much a gentleman with a duster as a person with a mop. The portrait of Harding is devastating and from the point of view of this reviewer eminently fair and just. In such a book praise takes on an added value and Bernard Baruch should be much heartened by the fact that he is practically the only person in Washington for whom the author has unqualified words of approbation.

It is rather startling to find a member of the younger generation finding his theme in the life of an old schoolmaster in a New England village. It is still more surprising to find the book capitally carried through. It is a slim volume which Robert Nathan has produced in ''Autumn'' (McBride), but he has managed to find room for emotion within his rather scanty pages. In spite of the fact that the task is well done we are not convinced that it is not a penance book. We do not believe that the theme or the manner is one which came unbidden to Mr. Nathan.

This collection of short stories by the conductor of ''The Sun Dial'' is another manifestation of the versatility of one of the foremost journalists of our day. But it is hardly enough to say that Don Marquis is versatile. There is no suggestion of stunt writing in ''Carter'' (Appleton). ''Old Man Murtrie'' is among the finest of native short stories.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in October in the public libraries in the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Flaming Forest	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
5.	Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
6.	Galusha the Magnificent	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	Helen of the Old House	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
3.	The Flaming Forest	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
4.	If Winter Comes	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE, BROWN
5.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
6.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3.	Helen of the Old House	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
4.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
5.	Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
6.	The Flaming Forest	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Helen of the Old House	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
5.	The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
6.	Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY

WESTERN STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Growth of the Soil	*Knut Hamsun*	KNOPF
5.	The Flaming Forest	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6.	The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3.	Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Helen of the Old House	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
5.	The Flaming Forest	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6.	Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
4.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
4.	The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
5.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Next War	*Will Irwin*	DUTTON

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
4.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
6.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
4.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
5.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM

WESTERN STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3.	The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
4.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
6.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
6.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

The Björnson of Bulgaria

WHEN the Allied statesmen came to balance the war books they subtracted a slice from West Hungary, added it to East Austria, and thereby called into existence Burgenland. No one ever heard of it until the time came for the compatriots of Franz Molnar to turn it over to the Austrians. It is approximately fifty miles long by ten or twelve broad, just about large enough in fact to be taken in on a single automobile trip if gas is high and your tires are a bit uncertain. The capital is Oedenburg, thirty-six miles southeast of Vienna, and popular at present as a theme for editorials.

Whether Hungary should retain Burgenland or Austria acquire it is not relevant. But no sooner had it become contested territory than Austria tried to establish her right to it by conjuring up the great men born in it. Joseph Haydn lived his life and composed his immortal oratorios in Eisenstadt, Burgenland. Franz Liszt, J. N. Hummel, and Hans Richter were all Burgenlanders. The famous violinist Joseph Joachim was born in this Austro-Hungarian strip. So were Adam Friedrich Oeser, the artist who exercised such a decisive influence on Goethe, and Winckelmann, one of the greatest students of art Europe has ever produced, and Tilgner the sculptor, and Angeli the portraitist, the latest of them all. He is living even now in Vienna. And Joseph Hyrtl, the renowed Austrian anatomist, as well as Joseph Kainz, the greatest actor of recent times, came from Burgenland.

In this there is a lesson. Let a country find itself in distress—and virtually the whole of Europe has been at war since the war—and it immediately begins to substantiate its claims to greatness by listing the immortals it has produced. Latvia, Serbia, Esthonia, and Burgenland are all doing it. It can easily be overdone. Just as any college graduates in time some men who become famous, so does any country produce some men gifted beyond their fellows. It would be indeed quite easy to compile a list of noted characters who were born on steamers while crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

It is with this in mind that we should attempt to evaluate the merits of Ivan Vazoff, the national poet of Bulgaria, who died on September 22 and whose death has been observed by his countrymen with a pomp and solemnity that have been shown but few poets since the death of Victor Hugo. The Bulgarians are convinced that through the loss of their uncrowned but munificently pensioned poet laureate, European letters have suffered a reverse from which recovery will be difficult. Let us not be ungrateful enough to query the wisdom of their opinion; but part of it is due to the fact that Bulgaria is a small country, has been in profound distress for years, and her list of illustrious sons is none too long. Vazoff was in fact one of the few whose works have been made accessible, through translations, to non-Slavonic European readers and to the two chief peoples of Asia.

Vazoff's case throws light on the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ways of New York City. His chief prose work is "Pod Igoto" translated into English with the title of "Under the Yoke". Written while its author was banished from his country and living in Odessa in 1889, it portrays the struggle of the Bulgarians with the Turks. The action takes place in the Balkan valleys in 1875. The Bulgarians are defeated. European critics rank it as one of the great novels of the Old World. Is it accessible to New Yorkers? The New York Public Library contains nine volumes by Ivan Mincheff Vazoff, all in Slavonic. The Library of Columbia University contains, aside from a few other works by Vazoff, likewise in Slavonic, "Under the Yoke" translated from the Bulgarian into Russian. If not in either of these libraries, it is unlikely that the English translation is to be found in any of the branches. This is one of the first books that either or both of these great libraries should buy.

Vazoff was born at Sopot, June 27, 1850. Leaving school at the age of fifteen, he became a clerk in a store with the usual results to the ledger when kept by a potential poet. In 1870 he read Eugène Sue's "The Wandering Jew" and learned a lot. In 1872 we find him at Constantinople teaching school and writing poetry. Three years later he is employed by the engineers constructing the Sofia-Kustendil railroad. In 1880 he is back in his native Sopot where he brings out a volume entitled "Bouquet de Mai". About this time he finds it convenient to sojourn in Rumania for a while. At Bucharest he becomes a member of the revolutionary committee the end of which is to recruit volunteers to help Serbia in her struggle against the Turks. The rest of his life does not need to be told here. It was one unbroken fight for the liberation of his country. Dramas, poems, short stories, novels, and historical sketches have poured from his pen, admittedly in great numbers, though it is an exaggeration to say, as the Bulgarian papers have said since his death, that "his collected works constitute an entire library".

He did for his country what Björnson did for Norway, though he had an infinitely harder task. After Norway had been under the control of Denmark for four centuries she came under the sway of Sweden. It was Björnson's task to have her achieve her independence. He succeeded in 1905. Bulgaria has been the political football of one country after another for centuries. It was Vazoff's task to have her achieve her independence. He succeeded in 1908. Though never holding a political office, except that of Minister of Education for two years, he did more for his country than all her statesmen combined, for he met with success where they met with failure. It is the way of poets.

Why was Vazoff's task so difficult? Bulgaria is a little larger in area than West Virginia and has a population of about four million—four million Bulgarians, Turks, Rumanians, Greeks, Spanish Jews, Armenians, Tatars, and Gipsies, all speaking their own languages. It is not a case of a melting pot, for they all date back to about the same time. It is rather like a retort or mixing pot. And of Bulgarian itself, there are many dialects or branches. Yet Ivan Vazoff somehow managed to acquire substantial literary fame. Björnson had an old established language ready for his use and a splendid literary tradition back of him. Vazoff had to create his tradition and, to a large degree, the very tongue in which he spoke and wrote.

A remarkable characteristic of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

man was his optimism. We know what Voltaire said in "Candide" derogatory of "naive optimists". He would have classed Vazoff among them. Vazoff himself however believed that the world is gradually growing better, that humanity has more of a chance now than in former years, and that eventually human nature will be as lovely as the woods and hills and valleys of his native land. His optimism may have been a trifle excessive, but "as dead as Voltaire" is a common expression with critics and reviewers in this year of Grace, 1921.

Yet the man knew the force of hate. He wrote, in 1888, a poem in French one verse of which runs:

Où donc chercher mes chants? Dans la nature?
—affreuse
Et étrangère à moi, tel une tombe odieuse
Par sa beauté sublime et son repos hautain?
C'est un seul sentiment qui fleurit dans mon
âme,
Refleurissant sans cesse et brillant tout en
flammes:
La Haine—cruel enfant des maux lourds et
sans fin.

It was the mood of a moment. The poem is entitled "My Muse in Mourning".

If America is sincere in her efforts to understand the "Balkan Situation", she would do well to familiarize herself a little at least with Bulgaria's leading writers. Pentcho R. Slaveikoff would in all probability have received the Nobel Prize had he not died (1912) before it could be bestowed upon him. Ivan Vazoff has been translated into English by Edmund Gosse who is not given to frittering away his time on nonentities.

Anyone who wishes to avail himself of the opportunity to mail a unique package to a friend so that the addressee will receive it on the afternoon of December 24 could hardly do better than to go on a foraging expedition into some part of the country where an exemplar of Vazoff's "Under the Yoke" is obtainable. And when through with it, this friend might pass it on to one of the libraries of Greater New York.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

An Italian Letter

THE current year is rich in documents of the Italian literary crisis and the endeavors to overcome it. Poets have attempted various ways. They attempted a revival of the classics, of the past, as "Il Boccaccino" (Bari, Laterza) shows. This poem in classical octaves by R. Balsamo Crivelli, without a breath of humanism, is a mechanical literary reform of patchwork rhetoric and childishness. It fails in not being written in the thirteenth century language and is devoid of grace of expression. There has also been an attempt to graft the newer formal French expression onto Italian aspirations in the hope of bringing poetry to a higher level. Raniero Nicolai in his "Elogio della Vita" (Milano, Primato Editoriale) is fired by Emile Verhaeren's poetical enthusiasm and Paul Claudel and Paul Fort's stiff expression, without succeeding in giving his verses a personal, or new form: his is merely a plucky attempt and a failure. On the other hand Francesco Pastonchi with admirable craftsmanship tries to overcome this crisis by using a diagram of modern sensation in the traditional form of the sonnet. But "Il Randagio" (Milano, Mondadori) is less than an endeavor, for the poet lacks humanity, his mode of expression is mechanical, and his literary representation is superficial. The conclusion is that the poetical crisis has not been overcome, nor are there any signs of a solution.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The reaction to fiction of lax morality is less mechanical although, up to the present, the results have not borne fruit. Writers of social perversion such as Guido da Verona, Luciano Zuccoli, Alessandro Varaldo, have fallen into disrepute with the public which nowadays prefers Giovanni Verga's masterpieces which are being newly republished, "Opere Complete" (Firenze, Bemporad), or Marino Moretti's quiet prose as in his excellent novel on "romagnolo" life, "La Voce di Dio" (Milano, Treves). Or it follows with interest the reactionary attempts to produce fiction representing faithfully human life and art. To this interest "Rubè" by G. A. Borgese (Milano, Treves) owes its success. Its author, at one time a well-known critic, had become a commonplace writer of newspaper articles or of obliging essays. Although his efficiency cannot be denied, "Rubè" does not succeed in describing Italy during and after the war, but is a poor retracing of other novels that now belong to the world's literature and characterize an epoch, such as: "La Chartreuse de Parme" by Stendhal, "La Confession d'un Enfant du Siècle" by de Musset, or still more "L'Education Sentimentale" by Flaubert. In Borgese's novel only the superficiality of Italian life is described (and often badly described) of that most eventful period from 1915 to 1921. Likewise Michele Saponaro, one of our most promising young writers, has given us an excellent novel, "Nostra Madre" (Milano, Mondadori), describing what in Italy is called the "land problem", a subject which was treated with masterly hand, directly after the Italian "Risorgimento", by Giovanni Verga in "Mastro don Gesualdo". But Saponaro does not describe: he declaims, he theorizes, and his is not an artistic achievement.

The book which best represents literary Italy of the present year and political Italy of the period above mentioned, must be sought for elsewhere. It is undoubtedly, with all its faults, "La Storia di Cristo" by Giovanni Papini (Firenze, Vallecchi). Papini is one of our most powerful and personal writers; he believes humanity is in danger of falling into an abyss unless a barrier be found. He sees its salvation in a return to the creed of Christ. But while he is spiritually inclined to a return to primitive Christianity, he reminds humanity of the disarmed imperialism of the Roman Church, which is the opposite of the pure spirit of Christianity. In this contradiction is reflected not only his restive soul of a thinker and an artist, but the state of post-war Italy, herself torn between two extremes: those who believe the country will be saved by Bolshevism, and those who think she will return to the imperialism of the Roman Cæsars.

GEROLAMO LAZZERI

Remy de Gourmont and His Friends

THE extent of Remy de Gourmont's influence is difficult to ascertain, because his readers are scattered over space and time. Wherever the "Mercure" penetrated, both in France and abroad, this influence quietly exerted itself, as Gourmont had become the centre and chief inspirer of that review, for a long time the best literary one in France.

Few people approached Gourmont, —there was no such thing as a crowd of young disciples around him. In fact, the very young did not like him. His admirers are to be found among the older, well-trained and sober amateurs of French language and litera-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ture; he has also followers among the believers in certain post-Darwinian theories which his later books expound; but, in our opinion, that element of fame will not prove to be the lasting one. Gourmont as a scientist was not much better than Zola, Brieux, or Léon Daudet. Gourmont as a critic (someone has called him the last of the Encyclopædists) ranks with the best; his "Promenades Littéraires" and his "Livre des Masques" will remain among the most illuminating commentaries on French letters. They deserve the enthusiasm of such connoisseurs as Ezra Pound.

For the leisurely enjoyment of a few, and of himself, he wrote poems —both prose poems and poems in verse —the last volume being "Divertissements", brought out after the author's death, but containing some early fragments, one dating from 1888.

Because of Remy de Gourmont's confined, solitary, misanthropic life, not many commentators have known the human and sensitive side of him, and he enjoyed a reputation for rationalistic, cold and purely analytic intelligence; to his real sensibility, the key is to be found in those "Lettres à l'Amazone" which appeared regularly in the "Mercure", rather than in "Promenades Philosophiques" or in "Dialogues des Amateurs sur les Choses du Temps".

These letters read sometimes as if the Amazone were a mythical person, created for the sake of the letters, rather than as if the letters were written for her. But the Amazone (Natalie Clifford Barney) exists. She occupies a most interesting place in French life and letters. She is American, at least by birth, although spiritually she belongs to America about as much as the great Artemis of Sparta belongs to Kansas. Her house in Paris is the meeting place of an intellectual élite (not to say, of *the* élite). Last year, she let her "Pensées d'une Amazone" be published in Paris (Emile-Paul). It is a gathering of thoughts far too keen, far too aimless ever to attain popularity on this side of the Atlantic, —although some do not quite lose their edge in an attempt for translation. For instance:

To need revenge—what a lack of perspicacity it betrays!

People say that a person is complicated when that person is simple enough to follow his or her own nature.

Yielding to certain temptations requires a terrific amount of courage.

Sad condition X. is in. Getting bald, and his brain has not yet appeared.

Etiquette is good enough for people without natural grace or harmonious impulses. It is all right for diplomats and parvenus. It cannot replace the fine instinctive politeness of modern individuals with the riches of many races in their blood.

We have just received a little booklet of criticisms and commentaries inspired by the first edition of "Pensées d'une Amazone". Apart from Roger Allard, Francis de Miomandre, Paul Valéry, Israel Zangwill (who remarks that "there is no thought that can frighten this Amazone"), and Anatole France (who exclaims: "Amazone! I kiss your hands with sacred terror"), —the others, however rich in praise, are often erratic. Nothing is more amusing than to see how a woman who does not confirm the habitual rules applied to feminine writers, easily throws the critics off the track....

This book was shown once to an American who was anxious to see it published in this country; on opening it he found this line: "As I was born intoxicated, I never drink anything but water". He closed the book in discouragement, saying: "The American public wouldn't understand...."

Miss Barney has done much to bring

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to light the unpublished writings of Remy de Gourmont. With Jean de Gourmont and André Rouveyre, she has taken attentive care of the writer's posthumous influence, and they have even begun running a "Revue Gourmontienne". It is undoubtedly thanks to them that the translation of "Decadence, and Other Essays on the Culture of Ideas" (Harcourt, Brace) has been entrusted to such an able hand as William Aspenwall Bradley's. This book will prove a good introduction to the skeptical and materialistic doctrines of Gourmont.

The last commentary on Remy de Gourmont and his friends has been given by André Rouveyre, in the form of a book, "Souvenirs de mon Commerce" (Crès). Rouveyre is known as an artist, and especially as a wood-engraver. For many years, a "Visage" by him appeared every month in the "Mercure de France". It was always a most cruel supercaricature, and neither friend nor foe was spared. We have also, by Rouveyre, a series of drawings for "Phèdre" and a collection called "Le Gynécée", to which Remy de Gourmont contributed a preface.

André Rouveyre appears now as a writer. Only a dozen woodcuts accompany his book. Besides the figures of Gourmont, Miss Barney, and their friends, there are excellent notes on Guillaume Apollinaire. We shall have more to say about this latter poet, whose influence is so marked on those of the literary vanguard.

PIERRE DE LANUX

The German Book World

UNDOUBTEDLY the most important and most eagerly awaited book of this or many another publishing season is the long forbidden third volume of Bismarck's "Reminiscences". The former Kaiser's most comprehensible final attempts to hold up the publication have caused English readers to enjoy a few months' start of the German in regard to this most fascinating human document. The legend that Bismarck himself wished to stifle the book during the Kaiser's lifetime has been exploded. For all its absorbing human interest, the weighty volume makes sad reading, like most revelations of great men. It reveals how easily vast catastrophe might have been averted. The German public, eagerly waiting for years to devour this personal explanation of their greatest statesman, bought up the first edition of 200,000 almost entirely in the form of advance orders to booksellers. A second edition of 200,000 is appearing at once. Bismarck himself declared the object of his third volume to be the inculcation of "understanding of the past and a lesson for the future". Another epoch-making man seems to be Rudolf Steiner, founder of Anthroposophy and the comprehensive social-political system which he calls a "Trinity of Social Organism". With the success of his magazine, Rudolf Steiner has descended into the lecture hall and thus popularized will no doubt gain untold new followers. He owns a strange temple-observatory on a hill near Basel, the only work of civilization created during the World War by the cooperation of all "enemies" and called the "Goetheanum". Congresses are to be held here, solemn festivals, instructive scientific courses. The trinity of social organism has already been put into practise by several great manufacturers in South Germany.

An Encyclopædia almost as famous in Germany as the "Encyclopædia Britannica" is Brockhaus's "Konversationslexikon". This fine old pub-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lishing house woke to the unsuitability of an early Victorian title which implied that one's whole desire for encyclopædic knowledge was to improve one's small-talk. A prize competition for a new title brought 4,760 replies and the winning title, chosen by three senders, was Brockhaus's "Handbuch des Wissens".

In Bremen the "Urgötz" has been performed in the City Theatre. This is Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen" in the original draft of 1771. There were countless characters, forty-four scenes, and the performance took nearly six hours. It was not only a literary but a purely human curiosity, for it revealed a fiery young twenty-two year old Goethe, akin to Schiller, and a comparison with the later and approved version of "Götz" shows how much vigor, originality, and sheer genius were stifled in Goethe by his life in little Weimar and his position as a court official.

Neukölln, a suburb in the poverty-stricken north of Berlin, is making a determined effort to do away with the "penny dreadful" which so often shows the youthfully depraved the quick way to criminality. A great library of well printed, good literature, two hundred different books of thirty pages each, has been provided in the Town Hall. Every child or youth who brings a worthless book receives one of the good books in exchange. It is interesting to note that next to the great German animal story-teller Herman Löns appears Ernest Thompson Seton, and that the travel writers include Nansen and Stanley. So far the affair is a great success. Over three thousand worthless books have already been exchanged and other Berlin boroughs are preparing to follow Neukölln's example.

Ernst Toller's "Masse Mensch", a passionate advocacy of absolute pacifism even in the face of brutal tyranny, has been produced at the Berlin People's Theatre. The effect in certain scenes was so great that the play ceased to be theatre and became life—Toller is welcomed by certain critics as the only expressionistic dramatist of strong dramatic power. Meanwhile the young Communist still serves out his sentence, earned during the wild week in Munich for riot, and has lately been forbidden to write—an abominable torture for a literary man, against which the world of German authors is to raise a roar of protest.

Another work of importance far beyond the books of the day is Fritz Mauthner's "History of Atheism in the Occident", of which the second volume has just appeared. Mauthner, who is famous as a philosophical and philological scholar, has here written a vast work which is described as the "stupendous romance of an idea". This history of free thought rises frequently to dramatic heights in its description of the breaking of the way for freedom of the mind, and is thereby so objective that it is scarcely possible to discover Mauthner's personal standpoint on the question of atheism.

H. L. Mencken's brilliant "In Defense of Woman" is to be issued shortly by the famous Munich house of Georg Müller and the graceful essayist Franz Blei is making the translation. Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" is exciting the attention of several publishers and will soon be definitely launched in the midst of the German public. S. Fischer, one of the most important publishers of belles lettres, has taken Frank Harris's vividly psychological "Life of Oscar Wilde" and the translation is already well under way.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

Palmer Cox

One of the first events we remember from the panorama of childhood, is the handing over to us by some uncle, aunt, or grandparent, of a huge red bound volume of "St. Nicholas". There commenced days of golden delight. Brownies! As industrious as ants were the Brownies, and as gay as clowns! They made our days joyous, and scampered through our dreams. It was not until the other day during BOOKMAN WEEK that we finally met the creator of the famous Brownies. He lives now out at East Quogue, Long Island, by the sea, where he writes verses and makes Brownie cards for his friends. What a kindly, delightful, stalwart old gentleman, who brought along Palmer Smith, his young namesake, for his first trip to New York City. Mr. Cox rambled on about old days in San Francisco, of newspaper work, of his first encounter with Mary Mapes Dodge, then editor of "St. Nicholas", of how she liked his work, and finally, of the creation of the first Brownie, forty years ago. And the Brownie books sell as well as ever! His niece wanted Mr. Cox to stay all night; but no, this was impossible, for Palmer Smith loudly asserted that he must get back to Long Island for Sunday School the next morning.

It was indeed an event when the Goops met the Brownies. Gelett Burgess, that encyclopædia of children's bad manners, came to tell us about how much jam it is possible for a child to hold in one bare hand. If Rose O'Neil had been present with her Kewpies, we should have been a most happy family; but, after all, it was the Brownies who came on the scene first, and they still live their scampering lives in the nursery and over the library shelves. The following verse to ourself surprised us a bit. In fact, it even worried us a little; for it is said that a Brownie knows all things:

There's nothing sure below the stars,
Whatever plans you lay,
The gate will swing, or break the bars
And sin will have its day.
So careful be, and guard your name.
Observing Brownies say,
Be free from all that leads to shame
And bravely go your way.

We would have liked so much to spend last summer in Italy—for many reasons. Perhaps the greatest of these is that one can live comfortably on so little money. That is particularly appealing at this time of the inflocking of bills. It would have been a privilege for the Gossip Shop to attend the Dante celebration at Ravenna, too. However, our Lares and Penates guard us, and Miss K. R. Steege saw fit to write us an account of the happenings.

People of every class and creed and shade of political opinion were there, passing through the narrow street which leads to the tomb. From the Piazza which bears the poet's name, past the house of Guido da Polenta, where Dante was once the honored guest, the crowd came and went from morning until evening. Some had brought flowers, and leaves of laurel were strewed everywhere. Many of these had come by aeroplane from the villa by the Lake

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Garda from which D'Annunzio had sent them, and they lay on and around the tomb and even in the street outside. From the wall of the Polenta house opposite, there was arranged a series of lights coming through glass so tinted that when the evening came, their rays fell directly over the front of the tomb, causing an effect like moonlight. Behind shone the moon, nearly at its full, and in between rose the tower, also illuminated, where hangs the bell just given by the Communes of Italy. This bell, which is to ring always at the vesper hour, was the form chosen for the gift by Dr. Guido Biagi of Florence, and no more fitting memorial could have been found.

Many offerings were brought in sign of homage to the poet. From the army came a magnificent wreath and trophy of bronze, which was escorted by officers and soldiers and brought on a gun carriage, in a great procession, to be deposited at the front of the sarcophagus. From the city of Rome were sent the gates for the tomb, of metal fused from Austrian cannon. Other countries were represented: America, England, France, and Holland sent their gifts in recognition of the greatness of Dante.

Ravenna had done her very best on this occasion. There was a spirit of hospitality and welcome to all who came, and the citizens vied with one another in the matter of decorations. Beginning with the railroad station, there were flags and flowers; wreaths and garlands of green brightened old walls and dark corners; there was flash and color where usually there must be monotony and dulness. At night shops and houses were illuminated, and bands played in the Piazza. There were receptions, and gala performances at the theatre, and everywhere the people wandered about and there was much singing and talking. Thousands of *Fascisti* had marched from Bologna, and they arrived carrying their banners, full of enthusiasm as they went to pay their tribute of homage at the poet's tomb.

There were several imposing processions, when the flags passed and were lowered before the mausoleum. Delegations came from other cities, some of them most picturesque. Particularly effective was the group from Florence, whose *Gonfalonieri*, the standard bearers, carried the banner of their city, the red lily of Florence, and wore the costume of mediæval days. Some striking figures came also from Rome and Ferrara, while the *Carabinieri* in their gala uniforms added their usual brilliancy to the picture.

First nights gradually become as much a matter of routine as this season's theatrical failures. They divide themselves into several categories, the two most important being the bad plays at which one may see all the interesting people, and the good plays at which one may see all the intelligent people. (The implication is not entirely true. We find interesting people occasionally intelligent.) Personally, we were so held and bound down by the writing and acting in "Anna Christie" that we attended both the first and the second nights. Seldom has there been seen in New York such a character portrayal as Pauline Lord's. Seldom has there been seen a production so careful as that which Arthur Hopkins has given this play, —the fog which Robert Edmond Jones supplies in the second act gets into the nose, the ears, and sets the rheumatiz aching in old bones. This is not the place for dramatic criticism; but Your Gossip must say this much: take yourself bag and baggage to the Vanderbilt Theatre at the earliest possible. You'll probably meet us there, too; for we shall go again and again! As for who was there—it doesn't much matter. We were too busy watching "Old Chris" and his girl to see. Clare Eames, yes, in a huge white cloak; Dorothy Speare, having just finished a new novel; Ruth Hale, without her husband, who was attending a dinner to H. G. Wells.

We were fortunate enough, the other evening, to have a talk with Mrs. Eugene O'Neill. Some day we are to meet the playwright himself. It is interesting to know that O'Neill's plays of this year are products of several years back. The manner in which he is working now is something quite new, perhaps nearer "The Emperor Jones" in spirit. We heard of the panoramic "Ponce de Leon" which, in its rhythms, is said at times almost to approach the poetic, as did "The Emperor Jones". We hear whispers of a play called "The Hairy Ape", and of a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

great trilogy, which sounds fascinating indeed. Why aren't there more playwrights with the courage, doggedness, and insight of O'Neill?

Whatever is happening to Chicago! Old Gene Markey writes us (on yellow paper with green ink) that all the literati are deserting the city of Carl Sandburg and Mayor Thompson and are scurrying to the home of THE BOOKMAN and Mayor Hylan. Now this is not strictly true, Gene; for we have recently presented you with Oscar Williams, that youth who serves poetry customers at Kroch's book store, and whose first book "The Golden Darkness" is filled with delightful lyrics. Also, Pierre Loving is in your midst, and The Bookfellows are to publish his holiday play "Driftlake", with appropriate illustrations by one Will Rensom. Also, Stephen Vincent Benét has gone to your city to be married, a marriage made possible by reason of the purchase, by your own Henry Sell, of Steve's "Young People's Pride" for that magazine of his, "Harper's Bazar", now dedicated to the fostering of young authors as well as the pursuit of the effete dressmaker. So you see, Gene, you mustn't become too discouraged, even though it does look as if Ben Hecht were about to leave you and to finish his next novel, "Gargoyles", in New York City. Besides, we have it on good authority that you, yourself, are about to return to Broadway.

So Harry Hansen's luncheons have started again, have they? How we should like to run in on deep Carl Sandburg, gay Keith Preston, violent J. P. McEvoy, quiet Sherwood Anderson, wiry T. K. Hedrick, volatile Ben Hecht, efficient Henry J. Smith, Harry, himself—and, dear Gene, yourself (for whom words fail). Gentle readers, we publish (without his permission) a self-portrait of Chicago's youngest short story writer. And we conclude by appending Gene's latest budget of gossip:

Gene Markey

1. On Friday evening the Society of Midland Authors gave a dinner for Zona Gale, at which Edna Ferber, Stephen Graham (who has just returned from two months' tramping with Vachel Lindsay, and goes back to England in a few days) and Miss Gale made speeches. Observed at the tables were Harriet Monroe, Alice Gerstenberg, Ben Hecht, Clarence Darrow, Fanny Butcher, Edwin Balmer, and about a hundred others.

2. Pierre Loving, the young poet and critic, who, I believe, hails from your fevered civilization, is here for a few weeks. Some of his book reviews are appearing in the new magazine "Youth", which has been launched here this month. The first number of "Youth" featured poems of Oscar Williams, an article by Ben Hecht on the art of Wallace Smith, etc., etc.

3. Keith Preston has had a flattering offer from a London publisher to do a metrical translation of Ovid. (I don't know anyone who could do it so well! And then, he is particularly well equipped after the thesis he wrote for his Ph.D. Wherein he searched the classics for lecherous lines, "making", as he slyly puts it, "two *fleurs de mal* grow where but one had grown before".)

4. Edgar Lee Masters has gone into retirement at his lake cottage, and is finishing a new book—which he is keeping a mystery to all his friends.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

5. Ben Hecht, whose violent prejudices against New York are so well known in these parts, may weaken any day. Three offers have come from Gotham that would weaken the resolves of many a richer man. Since the Manhattanization of those eminent Chicagoans, Burton Rascoe and Percy Hammond, one never knows....

6. But one man, I'll venture a prognostication, who will never desert Chicago for the patter and pâté de foie gras of New York, is dear old Sherwood Anderson, once more established at his Palos Park estate, hard at work on a new book. As is Carl Sandburg, the colossus of Elmhurst. To these gentlemen the malodorous grime of Chicago is incense.

Our choice of poems in the September magazines is: "Sea Urge" by Harold Vinal (Tempo), "The Spinners at Willowsleigh" by Marya Zaturensky (Poetry), "Dead Calm" by Robert J. Roe (Voices), "Creed" by Jo Felshin (Contemporary Verse), "Lake Song" by Jean Starr Untermeyer (Century), and "The Miracle" by J. Donald Adams (Dial).

John Curtis Underwood, author of "Trail's End" and of one or two of the most powerful dramatic poems of the American southwest, writes us from Santa Fé. We had written him, asking why it was that the southwestern art movement seemed to be gaining so great a headway.

Among the men who have put Santa Fé on the literary map of North America since Lew Wallace wrote part of "Ben Hur" in the Old Palace in the late 'seventies, are the historians Colonel Ralph Twitchell, pageant director for the last two Fiestas, and Benjamin Read; Charlie Siringo whose "A Cowboy Detective", "A Texas Cowboy", and "A Lone Star Cowboy" have sold in the neighborhood of a million copies; and N. Howard Thorp whose "Songs of the Cowboys", one-fourth his own and three-fourths anthology, is his second collection of the sort.

These are all permanent residents, men of the type who make history as well as write it, men whose personal reminiscences cover the days of Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett, of the coming of the railroad, of the dawn of statehood and the vast and Gargantuan junketings of the legislatures of Colorado and New Mexico in the era before the Volstead Law, of the days of Bandelier and Charles Lummis and the other earlier archæologists and forerunners of Dr. Hewett and his colleagues at the School of Research.

There is a wealth of literary and racial tradition and folk lore in the making and in the memory of living men and women, that poets like Alice Corbin Henderson whose "Red Earth" is in its second edition and John Curtis Underwood whose "Trail's End" has been called in New York a poetry guide book to New Mexico, have indicated only here and there. Perusal of the plays of Maud McFie Bloom, a younger contemporary of the four men first mentioned, plays dealing with the native Mexican life in and near the capital for the last hundred years or so, will go far to verify this.

Writers come and go and some remain, poets more particularly thus far. Glenway Westcott, Rose Henderson, Phil Lenoir, and Yvor Winters may be numbered among Santa Fé poets past and present, as well as H. H. Knibbs, better known to many as a writer of fiction, who is here not for the first time, indefinitely. Mary Austin and Natalie Curtis are Santa Fé writers, as is Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, author of "Shadow Shapes" and "French Perspectives", who recently settled in Tesuque.

The new art museum's free exhibition and studio facilities, and the general policy of the museum and School of Research under the leadership of Dr. Edgar L. Hewett have already made Santa Fé the centre of a southwestern art movement modern as Cézanne and old as the Pueblos whose growth is assured. Sheldon Parsons, art curator, leads the list in local sales. Kenneth Chapman, Carlos Viera, Warren E. Rollins, and Charles S. Rawles are among the older men prominent in this movement.

Of the best-known painters, sculptors, etchers, and workers in pastel who have made Sante Fé their temporary or permanent home, Robert Henri, George Bellows, Albin Polásek, John Sloan, William Penhallow Henderson, and Bror Nordfelt need no introduction to the general art public. Paul Burlin and Williard Nash indicate the modernist tendency. Olive Rush, Louise Crow, and Katherine Dudley are among the best-known women. Wilfred Kihn, Fremont Ellis, and Will Schuster are the most promising of the younger men. Painters from Taos like Ernest Blumenschein and Victor Higgins are closely affiliated.

It would be comparatively easy to fill a complete copy of THE BOOKMAN with a catalogue of Santa Fé's scenic, climatic, historic, and cultural assets as a literary, art, dramatic, and musical centre. These have all been touched on or amplified in the publications of the Santa Fé Railroad, the School of Research and other museums, and the local Chamber of Commerce. Also in the writings, notably, of Lummis, Ernest Peixotto, E. A. Powell, George Wharton, James and Agnes Laut. They have been shown on the screen to millions since the last annual

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fiesta, the first week of September, under the auspices of the Burton Holmes Travelogues.

In conclusion it may be well to remark that, short of our skyscrapers, Santa Fé is the only place in this hemisphere north of Panama, that has evolved a distinctively American architecture. Concerning this adobe blend of the Spanish and Pueblo styles, modernized successfully in the art museum, in the most beautiful moving picture theatre in America, in the new hotel and post office, and in many commercial structures and private homes and studios, the practical details of comparative cheapness and durability of construction are worth notice.

More and more of the artists are building their own homes and studios here this year. And in this tangible evidence of material well being and a determination to stay with the job, the future of this oldest capital as a centre of light and learning to a machine-stenciled and war-racked continent seems assured. Such is my four years' conviction.

The Detroit Centre of the Drama League offers two prizes for one-act plays, a prize of fifty dollars to be known as The Daniel Quirk Jr. Prize and a second of fifty dollars known as The Drama League Prize. Plays must be in by January fifteenth. The Quirk prize play will be produced by the Ypsilanti Players and mention of this production must be made on all programs of future performances. The same condition will apply to the Drama League play. All manuscripts must be sent to Mrs. Winthrop F. Victor, 1344 Jefferson Avenue, Pontchartrain Apartments, Detroit, Michigan. Manuscripts must not be signed by the name of the author (use a pen name). Neither should the author's address nor any indication of identity appear on the manuscript. Each manuscript must be accompanied by a sealed envelope bearing the title of the play, the pen name of the author, and his real name and address. No manuscript will be returned unless accompanied by postage. All plays submitted will remain the property of the author after the first production. In case the judges decide that no play submitted is worthy of a prize, neither the Ypsilanti Players nor the Drama League is under obligation to make the awards. All plays must be typewritten.

The Canadian Authors' Association, formed in March, 1921, to promote the interests of Canadian literature, recently welcomed home Bliss Carman at a recital given in the ballroom of the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Montreal. Mr. Carman has been for some time in retirement, writing verse. Lucky man, say we, as the winter season jumps upon us all with voracious claws. The poet was introduced by John Murray Gibbon, President of the Association, and it was his poem, "Dance of the Maple Leaves", to which children danced in a ballet the climax of which was the crowning of Mr. Carman with a wreath of red and yellow maple leaves.

We are the leaves that run
  Red, so red, and ablaze
With the burning of the sun
  So many summer days.

We are the leaves unknown
  Save to the things that fly,
And now, loose and wind-blown,
  Flame up before we die.

But ere we drift beneath
  The silence of the snow,
We twine for you a wreath
  Of glory as we go.

You led the caravan
  Of poets on Grand Pre,
And taught the Pipes of Pan
  In Canada to play.

In Fundy's tides you sought
  The Children of the Sea,
And April Airs you caught
  Under the maple tree.

Now at this Mountain Gate
  Your Autumn Song we hear,
And crown you laureate,
  Sweet-singing pioneer.

To be crowned by maple wreaths may be an uncomfortable honor (we are told that the crowns of emperors

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

weigh down the soul, while a poet's laurels merely tickle the temples). Nevertheless, it is comforting to know that Bliss Carman is receiving any honor whatsoever; for he deserves many and great ones.

H. G. Wells

Mr. Britling is going to see the Washington Conference through! There is no difficulty about recognizing Mr. Britling in the flesh. Had Mr. Direck—or indeed any careful and observing reader of such novels as "Kipps", "Love and Mr. Lewisham", or "The Undying Fire"—been at the pier the other night when the liner "Adriatic" arrived, he would have known at once that the host of Matching's Easy was paying a return visit. Escorted by the tall form of Herbert Bayard Swope and shepherded by that hustler's eagle eye, clutching under one arm a copy of "Three Soldiers", —so fast does fame travel,—balancing with his free hand a stick and an umbrella, a little flustered perhaps at the elusiveness in remote pockets of passport, landing card, customs declaration, and making those sibilant noises heretofore associated with the inventor in "The First Men in the Moon", the creator of George Ponderevo and "The New Machiavelli" stepped bravely down the gangplank. H. G. Wells was again in America for the first time since his seven weeks' visit of 1906. (That hasty inspection, by the way, produced "The Future in America", "an amazingly prophetic book", declares its author now.) But alas for the heart of Mr. Direck swelling with the anticipation of hospitality! Alas for the great hospitable impulse of New York, of all America! From that moment Mr. Wells assumed a mantle of impenetrable incognito. And no wonder. You cannot be banqueted, interviewed, buttonholed, and telephoned to all day long, and yet turn out the copy for which cable desks are clamoring in three continents. Your Gossip was asked by no fewer than six persons on the day following the man's arrival for his address, and unfortunately he did not know it. No, Mr. Wells is here as a reporter. With the exception of a dinner to him on November 2 by the newspaper on whose initiative he has come, there is no record of his having made even a semi-public appearance. When not reporting, he is going to look at America. Particularly, he wants to see something of our schools. And so after a week in the confines of the Village, he has gone into "seclusion" as he calls it, in a rather well-known Washington hotel. When he deserts that it will be not as Confucius Wells, the Great Teacher, or as the amiable if surfeited guest, but as Wells intensely curious and amazingly receptive.

The October "Literary Questions" were evidently difficult nuts to crack. As a result we can award only one prize, and that to Mrs. Kraybill of Asbury Park who was a dark horse in last month's contest.

Here's a new set of puzzlers sent us by Susanna A. Matteson of Auburn, Rhode Island. Send in your answers before December twentieth and be sure to state which of the answers you had to hunt up, and which of the books in this month's "Editor Recommends" you wish if you are one of the three lucky prizewinners. If, on the other hand, you find our questions too difficult or uninspiring, tell us so or, better still, send in a set of your own.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1. Who said he had made up his mind to write for antiquity, and why?

2. What poem of Mrs. Browning's was refused by the editor of "Cornhill" on the ground of impropriety, and who was the editor?

3. Who were Jane Fairfax, the Reverend Rufus Lyon, Colonel Lambert, Maggie Vervor, Squire Clinton, Captain Reece, Ernest Pontifex?

4. What literary lady was betrothed to Edgar Allan Poe, and where did she live?

5. Place the following quotations:

a. The light that never was, on sea or land.

b. To be great is to be misunderstood.

c. The general use of gunpowder is that it makes all men alike tall.

d. There is no place too humble for the glories of heaven to shine in.

e. The soldier asked for bread,
But they waited till he was dead,
Then gave him a stone instead
Sixty and one feet high.

6. What is a *boojum* and what is the usual fate of a person who meets one?

The answers to November's questions:

1. The originals of the following characters are:

a. Diana of the Crossways (in the book of that name by George Meredith)—The Honorable Mrs. Norton.

b. Eugène de Rastignac (in "Pére Goriot" and other of Balzac's books)—Thiers.

c. Lady Kitty Ashe (in "The Marriage of William Ashe" by Mrs. Humphry Ward)—Lady Caroline Lamb.

d. Mr. Tonans (in "Diana of the Crossways" by George Meredith)—Mr. Delane, editor of the London "Times".

e. The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue (in William Watson's poem)—Margot Asquith.

f. Glenarvon (in the book of that name by Lady Caroline Lamb)—Lord Byron.

2. "The lady from Philadelphia" appears in "The Story of the Peterkins" by Lucretia Hale to give the helpless family good advice.

3. The excellent servants are to be found in the following books:

a. Mark Tapley—Dickens's "Martin Chuzzlewit".

b. William, the hotel waiter—Shaw's "You Never Can Tell".

c. Dolly, the chambermaid—"Beau Brocade" by Austin Dobson.

d. Dulloo, the sais—"Miss Youghal's Sais" by Kipling.

4. Francois Villon composed his own epitaph in the form of his "Ballad of the Gibbet".

5. The boys in question appear in these works:

a. Six little Singing-boys—"The Jackdaw of Rheims", Ingoldsby Legends, by Richard Harris Barham.

b. Tommy Upmore—R. D. Blackmore's "Tommy Upmore".

c. Prince Mamilius of Sicilia—Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale".

d. Terence (or Fibsy) McGuire—"Raspberry Jam" and other of Carolyn Wells's books.

6. An episode similar to that related by Benvenuto Cellini in his autobiography occurs in Anatole France's "La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque".

7. There are innumerable works of fancy in which the plot turns upon a likeness between two of the characters. As, for instance, Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night", "The Woman in White" by Wilkie Collins, "The Prisoner of Zenda" by Anthony Hope, "A Tale of Two Cities" by Dickens.

Gov. Thomas C. McRae of Arkansas, inspired by Arthur Somers Roche's new novel, "The Day of Faith", set aside November first as a legal holiday, to be known as the Day of Faith. On that day Arkansas citizens were called upon to offer prayers for the success of the Disarmament Conference and at the hour of noon to repeat the allegorical words, "My neighbor is perfect". Such is the force of literature in these United States.

Strange that everyone of our correspondents this month seems to be lamenting the departure of geniuses for the great city. Laura Everett writes us from Berkeley that Charles Caldwell Dobie, author of "Broken to the Plow" and "The Blood Red Dawn", has left California; also Ina Coolbrith, with her snow-white hair and her memories of Harte, Clemens, and Joaquin Miller, has come to us again. Hal Waldo writes us from Auburn that Rupert Hughes still finds the coast and the movies entertaining. Hughes has been busy taking folk poems of Sandburg, Braley, Whittier, etc. and setting them to delightful music. Of such, the pastimes of a popular novelist in Hollywood. Then Miss Everett tells us of at least *one* returning hero:

Ralph Waldo Trine who, whatever else he may write, will always be known as the author of "In Tune with the Infinite", has re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turned from New York to his home at Los Gatos (the cats, in Spanish), the beautiful town in the low foothills bordering the Santa Clara Valley. The charm of the place does not depend on euphony of names. "Mountain Charley" is the name of the great redwood a few miles farther on in the hills. It is the rear guard of the monarchs of the Felton grove and of the Big Basin, and is twenty feet in diameter and two hundred and sixty feet in height. The Trine home is well up on the hillside overlooking the fruitful valley, a situation fitted to the thinking of harmonious thoughts.

That hymns of hate were not the only reading of the Germans during the conflict is shown by the fact that thirty thousand copies of "In Tune with the Infinite" were sold in Germany during the war.

Grace Hyde Trine, writer of poetry and pageants and a charming reader, joins with her husband in making the home a centre of hospitality of thought and deed. The California Writers' Club, entertained at the Trine home and at the club house of the Los Gatos Historical Association, passed resolutions favoring Disarmament and pledging itself to work for a cleaner press and better moving pictures.

A letter from F. N. Doubleday on his London visit enclosed a copy of William Heinemann's fall list. The Doubleday purchase of a large share of Heinemann's business has at least had one result in America: the publication of one or two works of exceeding beauty here this fall. Arthur Rackham's "Comus" is one of the quaintest volumes we have seen in many trips to many libraries, while Gay's "The Beggar's Opera", illustrated by the late C. Lovat Fraser, makes so gay a spot on the library table that the cover alone makes the purchase worth while. The English seem to possess an unflagging sense of the beautiful. We have seldom been more impressed by their high literary idealism than when we talked recently with J. C. Squire, the editor of "The London Mercury", and A. P. Herbert, the author of that splendid mystery tale "The House by the River". As an editor Mr. Squire has held himself to an unswerving policy which takes no stock of popular taste and admits only what he, himself, considers of the highest literary merit. Personally, we have not always agreed with his standards. But we believe that the more Americans who subscribe to "The London Mercury", the better; for it represents clearly and well the uncompromising attitude of a critic whose judgment is based on a splendid background and a strong artistic integrity. Incidentally, we found Squire and Herbert most genial gentlemen. We watched them through their first few days in America: bewildered by noises of elevated trains and motor trucks, astounded by Al Jolson in "Bombo", fluttered about by women at Biltmore affairs and by colyumists at our BOOKMAN luncheon. They remained still, quiet, unobtrusive, observing, charming. Just now, they are motoring through Kentucky. If all our English visitors were like these two...Ah well, it was most pleasant to meet them.

Katharine Hopkins Chapman, who has recently commenced giving lectures at southern colleges on the short story, is an indefatigable gatherer of Alabama writers' gossip for us. We don't know whether or not Scott will appreciate the following; but because he recently sent us a telegram which we were not at all able to understand, we proceed to publish Mrs. Chapman's note on the new addition to the Fitzgerald family:

That literary prodigy Scott Fitzgerald takes joyously to his new rôle of father. This is evident from the wire he sent his wife's parents, Judge and Mrs. Sayre of Montgomery, Alabama, announcing the fact: "Lillian Gish is in mourning; Constance Talmadge is inconsolable, and a second Mary Pickford has arrived."

Noting that even Fitzgerald, master of words, could temporarily think only in the feminine gender, you will not be surprised that the little adventurer from "This Side of Paradise" is a girl. However, she is named Scottie

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for her distinguished daddy, who attained note as a novelist, short story writer, and critic almost along with his majority. I wonder—from experience—whether, when this little seraph tunes up during writing hours, Scott will not decide that Scottie is "The Beautiful and Damned"?

To Alabamians Scottie, as a girl's name, already has literary associations, for Scottie McKenzie Frasier, of Dothan, Alabama, has a widening reputation for feature articles, lectures, and free verse. Her first volume, "Fagots of Fancy", last year received the accolade of praise from the New York "Times" Sunday Magazine and other discriminating reviews.

Speaking of names, what ails Porter as a writing signature? Nothing that appears on the surface, yet the only two men whom I recall by that sturdy English cognomen chose to hide it under a nom de plume—when such plumes are almost as rare as plumes on men's hats! Why should O. Henry and Holworthy Hall have refused to remain Porters to their literary ambitions?

Pirates have come into their own this season! The Howard Pyle book of pirates opens romantic vistas which had become somewhat dimmed. By the way, have you ever seen Lovat Fraser's "Pirates"? There's a book! For any lover of pirates and the Jolly Roger, there is one experience which is beyond all others. That is a visit to Dwight Franklin's studio, which lies hidden on the fourth floor of a ramshackle old theatre building on Lincoln Square, New York City. Here, with a switching on of current, small scenes of gory adventure pop at you from the dark. Franklin has a facility for character and grace in modeling that are uncanny. One of his new groups, which is the deck of a pirate ship, peopled with red-sashed and cutlassed gentlemen, so takes you back into the pages of your Stevenson, that you'll be able to stand there for hours, dreaming of Long John Silver, and Jim Hawks. The prize model, however, is one of a strip of beach in front of a turquoise sea and a burning sky. Two men struggle before your vision, bearing between them a heavy treasure chest. Some day, when we are very wealthy, we shall have one of these hidden away behind a sliding panel in our house, as have Booth Tarkington and many other lucky souls, and when we tire of modern realism, we shall be able to switch out the house lights, turn on the soft glow of pirate lights in southern seas. The other night we met another Dwight at Mr. Franklin's, Laurette Taylor's son Dwight Taylor, who is nineteen or thereabouts, has written good verse, draws well, and is studying at the Art Students' League. Between us, we managed to convince Mr. Franklin that he should draw us some pirates. Behold the result. Presently, too, we found that Taylor was still in his 1890 period. By that we mean that he still admires the men of the 'nineties with the same enthusiasm that we felt when we were a sophomore in college, and from which we admit that we've never quite recovered. We told him that we'd just had a long letter from Frank Swinnerton, who wrote that he'd carried our last epistle about in his pocket through a delightful vacation on Arnold Bennett's yacht, and had but now found

Dwight Franklin

Frank Swinnerton

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time to answer. So Dwight Taylor drew us a picture of Mr. Swinnerton, and we came away quite content.

We are renewing our youth in reading the letters which come in response to our Children's Book Week Essay Contest. Here are two of the first to arrive, printed exactly as written by the contestants. The announcements of the ten awards, and the first and second prize-winning essays themselves, will be published in the January BOOKMAN.

BOOKS I LIKE TO READ

By Stella Bohannon. Age 13 years

I like to read books which are thrilling and adventuresome. Books where the characters have very narrow escapes. Where the hero or heroine have such fine qualities. I also like to read books where there are great mysteries. I like books that seem in one place as though they will turn out one way then go on and turn out another way. There are some love stories I like to read. I like to read comical stories also those which are reasonably sad. I have a fancy for historical and poetical stories.

Some of the books I have thus far read are —"Pollyanna," "Pollyanna Grown Up," "The Leopard Spots," "Herbert Carter's Legacy," "The Girl of the Limberlost," "Freckles," "The Hoosier School Boy," "Mother Carey's Chickens" and the "Campfire Girls" books.

I like to read the "Pollyanna" books because the heroine does so many heroic deeds and made friends so easily.

"The Leopard Spots" is so interesting because it tells us so much about the history of our country.

"Herbert Carter's Legacy" attracts my attention because it shows just how some wealthy people treat the poor. It also shows how anyone's position in life may be changed.

I like to read "The Girl of the Limberlost" because it shows how people may work themselves up in life whether they be poor or rich.

"Freckles" is interesting to me because it shows where there is a will there is a way to do anything. It is also very adventuresome.

I like "The Hoosier School Boy" because it shows how much better qualities in some people than others.

"Mother Carey's Chickens" shows how affectionate the members of the family may be to each other.

I like "The Campfire Girls" book because they show how much good work an organization may do. They are also very adventuresome.

BOOKS I LIKE TO READ

By Julia F. Spratt. Age 12 years

When I was seven years old, I began to read Louisa Alcott's books. I started with "Jack and Jill," then came "Under the Lilacs." As I and the books grew older, I read "Little Women," "Little Men," and many others. I still read them over, and over again. Amy was my favorite in "Little Women." Then came "Jo" with all her boyish pranks.

Since then, I have read many other books, and one set, which I dearly love, is the Five Little Peppers. It tells all about their troubles in the Little Brown House, and also their good luck, when they are at last wealthy. These books, are dear to the heart of any girl between the ages of ten and fifteen.

The books I love most of all are the corner house girl series. Agnes is so like myself, I can imagine I am living in the Corner House Mansion, with a cross old aunt. Agnes who is twelve years old, says in the story that she has bushels of molasses colored hair and blue eyes that would stare a rude boy out of countenance, but she would spoil the effect the next moment by giggling. My friends say Agnes would be a good playmate for me, as I am like her in every way.

My sister likes to read Dotty Dimple stories. I used to enjoy them myself, but now I believe they are a little too young for me now.

The last book I read is called Wilderness Honey. It is a very good story for boys and girls, and tells many interesting things about bees. How they hatch a queen bee, what she is fed with, and how she works when she comes into the world.

I have read the Little Colonel books, and found them very interesting. The one I like best is where she goes to boarding school. I am entertaining the hopes that I may go some day. Little Colonel talks with a sweet southern drawl and draws out her ā's. Everybody she meets falls in love with her at once of course she has a few rivals but she wins them over in the end. It was a beautiful book and I will long remember the pleasant hours it held for me as I held it with one hand and munched an apple.

I have read the Alger books but I only enjoyed the first one as the others were all written on the same plan.

David Copperfield was very nice also The Count of Monte Christo, Swiss Family Robinson, Mark Seaworth, Rajah of Dah, Bonnie Prince Charlie and many others.

They were all so interesting I really can't tell which one I enjoyed the best. I have tried to read Pride and Prejudice but only parts of it are childish so the book and I don't get along very well. I love Dicken's works and I will continue to read them. I love good books and I could almost read eight books a day, so that is why I hope to win a prize either the first or second.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED